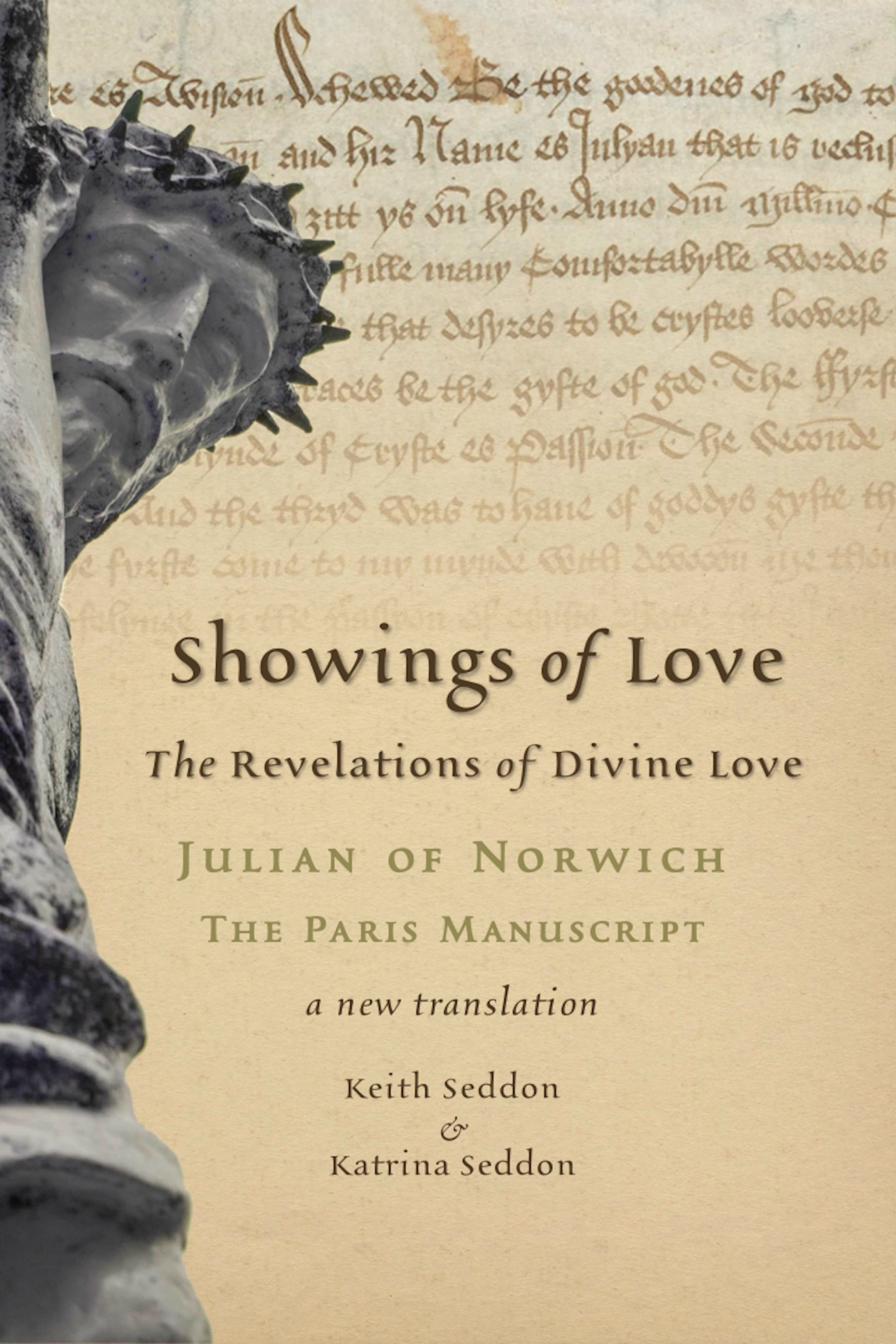


Showings *of* Love

The Revelations *of* Divine Love

JULIAN OF NORWICH

THE PARIS MANUSCRIPT

a new translation

Keith Seddon
&
Katrina Seddon

Showings of Love

The Revelations of Divine Love

Julian of Norwich

In 1373, whilst gravely ill, Julian of Norwich received sixteen mystical visions of Christ's passion and of God's boundless mercy and love. Her account is the earliest surviving work in English known to have been written by a woman, presented here in both its Long Text and abridged Short Text versions.

This new translation of the Paris manuscript presents Julian's voice with clarity and fidelity. Without modernising beyond necessity, it seeks to preserve the cadence and texture of her thought, making her meaning accessible to modern readers.

The Introduction offers a comprehensive account of Julian's theology, especially with regard to her confidence in God's universal love and her conviction that all things are held in divine compassion. A glossary of central themes supports readers new to her work.

Cover photograph by Wim van 't Einde on Unsplash laid over detail of first page of the AMHERST *manuscript*

SWAYING WILLOW PRESS

9 781326 745639

Showings of Love

The Revelations of Divine Love

JULIAN OF NORWICH

A new translation of the Paris Manuscript

Keith Seddon & Katrina Seddon

In May 1373, whilst gravely ill and expecting to die, Julian of Norwich received a series of sixteen mystical visions – 'showings' that revealed Christ's suffering, the mystery of sin and, most profoundly, the boundless mercy and love of God. She recorded them in what would become the earliest surviving book in English known to have been written by a woman.

This new translation of the Paris manuscript presents Julian's voice with clarity and fidelity. Without modernising beyond necessity, it seeks to preserve the cadence and texture of her thought, making her meaning accessible to modern readers.

The Introduction offers a comprehensive account of Julian's theology as it appears in her *Showings* – especially with regard to her confidence in God's universal love, her insistence on a God wholly loving and never wrathful, and her conviction that all things, including sin, evil and suffering, are ultimately held within a compassion that will 'make all things well'. A Glossary of central themes supports readers approaching Julian for the first time or returning to her with fresh questions.

Quiet, searching, and luminous in its trust in divine goodness, *Showings of Love* continues to offer a rare message of consolation and hope to readers navigating the world of today.

Keith and Katrina Seddon live in Yorkshire with their two cats, Ron and Hermione.

SHOWINGS *of* LOVE

The Revelations *of* Divine Love

Julian of Norwich

The Paris Manuscript

A new translation

Keith Seddon & Katrina Seddon

SWAYING WILLOW PRESS

First published 2026 by Swaying Willow Press
BM BOX 1129, LONDON, WC1N 3XX
showings1373@gmail.com

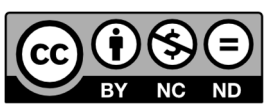
Copyright © Keith Seddon and Katrina Seddon 2026

The right of Keith Seddon and Katrina Seddon to be identified as the authors of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

Book & Typographical Design by Keith Seddon
Typeset in 1999 Livius 13/15 pt. and Cloister 11.5/15 pt.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Bible quotations marked NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



This work is published under a Creative Commons licence, CC BY-NC-ND: This licence allows reusers to copy and distribute the work in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creators.

ISBN 978-1-291-97348-8 (clothbound)
ISBN 978-1-291-94564-5 (casebound)
ISBN 978-1-326-74563-9 (paperback)

In the midst of her visions, Julian heard God
speak these words:

all shall be well
and
you shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well
because
there is a great deed that I shall do on the Last Day
which will
take you from all your suffering, from all your sickness, from all your discomfort and from all your sorrow. And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss. And you shall never again have any manner of suffering, no manner of sickness, no manner of displeasure, no frustrating of desires, but forever joy and bliss, without end.

And later she writes:
And all this teaching and this true comfort is generally applicable to all my fellow Christians.

These five extracts are taken from Julian's *Showings*,
Chapters 27.2, 32.1, 32.3–5, 64.2, 68.6, respectively.

CONTENTS

Preface 9

Introduction 13

1: Julian's Illness 14

EXCURSUS A *Julian's Name* 16

2: The Crucifix 18

EXCURSUS B *Three Gifts* 21

3: The Small Thing 22

4: Sin 24

5: No Wrath in God 31

6: Two Views 34

EXCURSUS C *From World to Anchorhold* 36

7: Christ's Suffering – Passion and Crucifixion 40

8: Mankind's Suffering – Being in the World 42

EXCURSUS D *Julian's Norwich* 46

9: Two Deeds 51

10: God as Mother 57

11: The Lord and the Servant 60

EXCURSUS E *Augustine's 'City of God'* 66

12: Julian's 'Soul as City' 67

EXCURSUS F *Universal Salvation* 70

13: 'Those who shall be saved' 72
14: Julian's Universalism (1) 74
15: Julian's Universalism (2) 79
EXCURSUS G *Satan in Medieval England* 82
16: Demonic Assaults 84
17: Coda 89

Chronology 91

Showings of Love
[The Long Text] 97

A Vision
[The Short Text] 447

Appendices

1: Extract from Blomefield's *History of the City and County of Norwich* (1803) 533

2: Reassessing The Relationship Between Julian of Norwich's Short Text and Long Text: *A Case of Editorial Intervention?* 535

Glossary ~ *Essential Themes and Meanings* 541

Bibliography 561

PREFACE

God has always spoken to prophets, mystics, poets, artists and others down the long ages of this world, in all cultures, in all sorts of ways. Julian's text is just one example of one way in which that can happen. And for those of us who do not hear the voice of God or see divine visions, we may read texts of the sort that Julian made, and hear his words nevertheless, for God does mean to talk to us – we may have that thought – and this, for us, is the way that he does it. In making the world just as it is, with these people, with these histories, with just these features, God also creates those points in space and time at which he introduces us to Julian, and we may recognise that whenever anyone picks up her book, God is saying: *Here is something for you that may help. My message was not for her, for Julian alone – but for everyone. Just as I am in all things, and in all books, I am in Julian's book, and I speak to those who read her writings.*

Julian of Norwich, anchoress, mystic, theologian and writer sends us her texts from medieval England to tell us about her experiences when God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit came to her offering visions of comfort and love, and so that those who read her may also find comfort amid their suffering, find relief from their vexations and afflictions, and know that God loves them and will ultimately 'make all things well'. We cannot know whether Julian ever imagined that her book would reach across such a long span of time to arrive here, twenty or more generations after her own time. Certainly, she would not have known

that our time, much like her own, would be afflicted by pandemic, war, social and religious unrest, political upheaval and widespread uncertainty. However, unlike the plagues and feudal strife of the fourteenth century, we now face planetary crises of a completely different order: climate collapse, mass extinction, runaway technology, nuclear annihilation and the unforeseen paradox of global interconnection deepening inequality and magnifying instability. Yet, in her timeless wisdom, Julian's writings speak to these very challenges, offering hope and reassurance that God's love transcends the boundaries of history, geography and human struggle. Her words remind us that, even in the darkest of times, the divine promise that was made to her through her visions endures, to somehow, eventually, 'make all things well'.

Julian's vision of divine love is not a relic from the distant past but a living message, vibrant with meaning for our world today. Julian invites us to pause, to listen deeply, and to trust in the eternal presence of a God who holds all creation in its being through the power of love. To engage with Julian's writing is to embark on a spiritual journey, one that challenges and comforts, uplifts and grounds us, reminding us that divine love is always near, even when we may be feeling it the least.

The typeface we have chosen for this translation reflects the fact that Julian's work, of course, originated with and was disseminated (for possibly two centuries) in handwritten form.[1] All books for readers of her time and for some time after were individually made, written letter by letter. Our thought is that

[1] The typeface is called '1999 Livius', designed in 1999 by Swiss calligrapher Klaus-Peter Schaeffel: luc.devroye.org/fonts-59750.html

our readers may have some sense of this whilst reading the translation. Perhaps also, reading a typeface that is not typically used for modern texts, the reader may find that they slow their reading and fall more easily into Julian's cadence and rhythm.

For those new to Julian, may we suggest that readers dip into our Glossary. It highlights the principal terms and concepts running through her writings; we trust that readers will find here a survey of Julian's thought in brief, offering a helpful orientation before turning to the text itself.

The text of the present edition follows that of the PARIS manuscript[2] collated with SLOANE 2499[3].

KEITH SEDDON
KATRINA SEDDON

Yorkshire
July 2026

[2] Following the typographical facsimile in Reynolds and Holloway 2001 and the edition by Baker 2005. The original PARIS manuscript is currently held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Fonds Anglais 40 (online at bit.ly/3jhLPca).

[3] Following Crampton 1993 (online at the Middle English Texts Series, bit.ly/3FE7Kpu), Watson and Jenkins 2005, and Windeatt 2016. The original SLOANE manuscripts – including 2499 – are currently held by the British Library. SLOANE 2499 is online at bit.ly/4l6NonD and SLOANE 3705 is online at bit.ly/40GmOds.

ABBREVIATIONS

LT = The Long Text, usually referred to as the *'Showings'* or the *'Revelations'* is extant as three manuscripts, the PARIS manuscript in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, and two SLOANE manuscripts (SLOANE 3705 probably copied from SLOANE 2499) in the British Library in London. 'SLOANE' in this present edition references SLOANE 2499.

ST = The Short Text, often referred to as the AMHERST manuscript, forms part of a larger anthology of devotional texts, also held in the British Library in London, designated AMHERST 37790 – Julian's *Vision* starts at folio 97r.

INTRODUCTION

What does it all mean? Why have we come here to this place of suffering, illness and eventual death? What are we supposed to do, now that we are here? Is this how God has made the world? Why would he want us to suffer? For no matter the excess of joys that any one person may rejoice in – even if that person is not ourselves – we know that those joys must end, illness must come, and death awaits us all. Will we live on, in another life, free of suffering after we die? Do all people go to Heaven? Is God angry with us for the bad things we did, whether we intended those bad things or not? Why have we got this free will to do just as we choose, if all it does is get us into trouble?

Julian of Norwich is able to address these questions in deep and meaningful ways – in consequence of her having had the strange and wonderful experience that came to her over a three-day period – while she lay in bed at death's door over half a millennium ago. She wrote it all down (or gave instruction for the writing) perhaps in the first instance as a private journal is written, to make a record for her own use, but, in doing so, she of course also provides for her readers the story of her mystical encounter and what she thinks it means. We are able to enter with her into that remarkable and extraordinary meeting with God and, when we do, through her words God will talk to us also and help us to relieve our anxieties about suffering and death and sinfulness and why God wants us to go through life in this way; and also, for those of us who want to devote our

efforts to finding an understanding of it all, learn why this is something important, worthwhile and potentially enriching and life-changing.

1 ~ *Julian's Illness*

Somewhere in the dark, not so far away, tremulous footsteps clatter on the cobbles of the street. Between the sloping roofs and over fences there can be seen the faint glow of the coming dawn, tentatively tinting the eastern sky in preparation for a new day. But as yet, as the black shadows still slumber in the deserted streets, the city is so very dark and so very silent, except now, at this spot, where the glimmer of a lantern flickers in the eyes of a startled cat and the sound of those footfalls disturbs the repose of someone sleeping close by. A friar perhaps, possibly a priest, but a man in Holy Orders to be sure,[4] has been summoned, and here he comes, his book, candles and crucifix bundled under his arm. As his serving boy goes ahead, lighting the way with the lantern, he follows breathlessly, his quick steps tapping out an urgent tattoo that echoes between the dark buildings that face the narrow street.

They had set out immediately upon receiving the message that she is dying – the young woman is really dying this time. He has already administered the Last Rites, two nights ago. But now he is back again, and she really is dying.

As the crepuscular light of dawn begins to dilute the shadows, man and boy enter the house. It is obvious that no one has

[4] He is referred to as Julian's 'curate' (LT3.2 and ST2.2).

slept this past night, and all the rooms are still lit, as they were last time, by the flickering glow of candlelight.

In her room upstairs, the young woman is only thirty. Her breathing is laboured as she gasps feebly for each shallow inhalation. Her mother is with her, as are the household servants, and possibly her brothers and sisters, and other relatives are there also. The friar climbs the staircase and enters the familiar room where he begins to unwrap his paraphernalia. The smell of sickness and sweat-drenched bedlinen fills the room, and shadows flit across the walls and ceiling in response to the movements of the people gathered around the bed.

The dawn of this new day is anticipated as the bearer of sorrow and loss.

In one way or another, this is a scene that in its generality has been enacted millions of times in the course of human history, for we all must die, and all the things that happen at this time must be done. But this dying is different – not only for the fact that the dying person will recover and live on into old age, but because of the strange and wonderful things that she is about to experience and which she will soon enough write down. This sick young woman, she tells us in her writings, had been praying for some sort of affirmation or confirmation or guidance from God. What is about to happen will far surpass her most optimistic hopes or expectations.

We are in Norwich in the east of England, and it is May 1373.[5] The woman who is dying is, of course, now known as

[5] Possibly it is the 8th of May, as the SLOANE manuscripts state, or possibly it is the 13th, as the PARIS manuscript maintains. Scribes, at some point in the text's transmission in writing the date with Roman numerals,

Julian of Norwich, the well-known early English mystic who had visions of God and conveyed to her readers (amongst many other things) that 'all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well'.[6]

EXCURSUS A ~ *Julian's Name*

It is frequently suggested that Julian acquired her name 'Julian of Norwich' for the fact that her anchorhold was attached to the church of St Julian, in Norwich.[7] And, indeed, the AMHERST manuscript[8] begins with the rubric: 'Here es a vision, shewed be the goodenes of God to a devoute woman. And hir name es Julian, that is recluse atte Norwiche and yit is on life, anno domini 1413'; and the PARIS manuscript concludes with an addendum that identifies 'Juliana ancorite Norwiche' as the author.[9]

There are three surviving wills from the period that specifically mention Julian's name and vocation. That of Roger Reed – the earliest evidence for Julian's enclosure – leaves two shillings to 'Julian, anchoress' (proved in 1393 or 1394). That of Thomas Emund leaves 'twelve pence to Julian, anchoress at the

---

have got confused between viij and xiij, reading or writing one for the other.

[6] The phrase 'all shall be well' occurs frequently in Julian's texts. See LT27.2/3, 31.1, 32.1, 34.3, 35.1, 63.5, 68.7; ST13.10, 15.6, 16.2/3 and 22.5.

[7] We know that there was an anchoress as St Julian's at this time.

[8] References in the footnotes to the AMHERST manuscript will use the abbreviation ST (for *'Short Text'*).

[9] We may observe that neither of the SLOANE manuscripts include their author's name.

church of St Julian in Norwich' and 'eight pence to Sarah, living with her' – presumably her servant – (made in 1404, proved in 1406). And that of Isabel Ufford leaves 'twenty shillings to Julian, recluse at Norwich' (made in 1416)[10]. There is a fourth will made by John Plumpton which does not mention Julian by name, which leaves 'forty pence to the anchoress in the church of St Julian, Conesford, in Norwich'; he also bequeaths to 'her former maid, Alice, twelve pence' (proved in 1415).[11]

There is one possibility, however, that should not be ruled out: that 'Julian' was, in fact, the name that 'Julian of Norwich' was given at birth. 'Julian' was not an uncommon name for girls in the fourteenth century, and there is little evidence for anchorites or anchoresses adopting a religious name as part of any rite of enclosure.[12] 'Julian' may well have been her name from the point she was baptised.

Fr John–Julian researched the 789 known hermitages and anchorholds in England from the 11th to the 15th centuries and found no evidence that any hermit, anchoress or anchorite ever took a new 'name-in-religion' upon taking up their lives of seclusion.[13] Following the work of J. F. Chaplin (an antiquarian active in the mid-twentieth century), Fr John–Julian presents a cogent case for Julian of Norwich being one Lady Julian Erpingham, wife of Roger Hauteyn and – following Hauteyn's death in 1373 and remarrying in 1376 – wife of Sir John Phelip

[10] Presuming that Isabel Ufford did not name a beneficiary who had already died at the time she prepared her will, we can, with some confidence, conclude that Julian was stll alive in 1416 at the age of 74.

[11] See Watson and Jenkins 2006, 431–5.

[12] Windeatt 2016, xiv.

[13] Fr John-Julian 2009, 21–2.

with whom she had three children, Rose, William and John. Phelip died in 1389.[14] Julian's change of circumstances may be what precipitated her into her anchoritic life. Whether any of this is true, we will almost certainly never know.

What matters most to readers coming to Julian in these modern times is not who Julian actually was (not that this question lacks all interest) but what she wrote in consequence of the revelations she experienced while she lay at death's door all those centuries ago on a spring day in 1373.

2 ~ *The Crucifix*

Julian has already received the Last Rites (two days previously) and fully expects to die. As day begins to dawn, she finds that she has lost all sensation in her lower body. She is able to look up, her gaze fixed firmly upon Heaven, trusting that soon she will go there. At this point, her curate,[15] who has just arrived, holds before her a crucifix, intending that the image it bears will comfort her as the pain of her laboured breathing becomes ever more intense. (LT3.1–3)

This is the moment that Julian's encounter with God begins. The room around her grows quickly dark, yet as she focuses her attention upon the crucifix, she finds that it alone remains mysteriously illuminated (LT3.3).

[14] Fr John-Julian 2009, 23–7.

[15] This person may or may not have been a priest. Julian has already made her last confession as one of the sacraments of the Last Rites. She is not invited to make a new confession which would have required the presence of a priest. So perhaps this person was someone in Holy Orders, but not ordained.

And now, inexplicably, suddenly, all her pain is gone (LT3.4), and seeing the image of Christ in his suffering, standing out so prominently against the dark background of the all but invisible room around her, awakens her memory of a request she made to God long ago, to be present at Christ's Passion, to be present with Mary Magdalene and the others, to experience first-hand Christ's suffering and theirs (LT2.2).

The next moment, she sees Christ alive and bleeding from his wounds, his face right in front of hers. The thorn of crowns that was made to mock him, thrust down hard against his head, is causing a copious flow of hot, red blood to run down his face. Julian is aware that in this moment, Christ is suffering *for her*, and she is convinced that it is he himself who 'by some direct means' is showing this to her (LT4.1).

Suddenly, Julian is filled with a sense of profound joy. This is the joy, she is led to understand, that will be experienced by all those who come to Heaven after their lives here come to an end (LT4.2).

And now she is no longer in her room, but present with Mary, Christ's mother, as she would have been when she conceived. Julian is conscious of Mary's experience, directly apprehending Mary's reaction when the archangel Gabriel comes to her, telling her that she will conceive miraculously and bear God's incarnation and give birth to the Son of God.[16] Mary, astonished that God should choose *her*, embraces the task she is called to, gladly declaring that she is 'God's handmaiden'. (LT4.4)

Julian's vision develops in complexity, and she becomes

[16] Lk 1:26–38.

increasingly aware of the relationship between divine love and human suffering. In the presence of Mary, she discerns the significance of Mary's humility and obedience – qualities that, for Julian, illuminate the broader pattern of human response to God. This scene functions not simply as a visionary episode but as a theological disclosure, inviting Julian to reflect on the coherence of God's purposes. She recognises that Mary's assent to God's will provides a paradigm for her own posture of trust, even amid uncertainty and pain (LT4.4).

Julian's mystical experience, initiated by her focused contemplation of the crucifix, unfolds as a sustained meditation on divine love. As the room darkens and only the crucifix remains visible, she is drawn into an intensified awareness of the Passion, perceiving Christ's wounds not as a distant historical event but as a continuing source of grace. In this moment she understands Christ's suffering as directly related to her own, revealing both a personal and a universal expression of divine love. Her vision then extends to the Annunciation, where Mary's acceptance of God's will becomes, for Julian, a key to understanding how human purpose may be brought into harmony with divine purpose. Through Mary, she recognises that such harmony allows suffering to be understood, not in opposition to joy, but the means by which joy may be ultimately realised. This insight enables Julian to situate her own suffering – the very condition that precipitated her Showings – within this same pattern: her afflictions become intelligible as instruments of grace, the means through which God imparts the revelations that will deepen her relationship with God.

Hence, Julian's experience is not merely visionary but transformative, a participation in the very life of God. She comes to

understand that Christ's Passion is an ever-present reality, a source of boundless love that embraces all human pain, and transforms it into the joy of eternal life.

EXCURSUS B ~ *Three Gifts*

Right at the beginning of her account, Julian explains how she had requested of God 'three gifts'. The first is her wish to really be at Christ's Crucifixion, to see for herself how the crucified man suffered for her, and to be present with Mary Magdalene and the others who loved Jesus, also there witnessing his execution (LT2).

Her second request was to be struck down by a 'bodily sickness' that would bring her to the brink of death, in anticipation of which she would receive the Last Rites. Julian wanted to be afflicted by all the pains and torments that could usually be expected to accompany such sickness,[17] in the belief that going through this experience she would be purified by God's mercy and, in consequence of the whole experience, afterwards live 'more completely to the honour of God' (LT3).

And thirdly, Julian desired to receive 'three wounds':[18] the

[17] These would encompass the usual pains and discomforts of the illness itself, but would also include 'torments inflicted by Fiends', agents of Satan sent to entice or cajole the sick person into sin by forgetting God, crying blasphemies from their pain, and all manner of aberrations arising from their fear and distress but, above all, to let fail their gaze towards Heaven as they remain focused on earthly matters.

[18] Why does Julian request 'three *wounds*'? In ST1, Julian explains how the desire for these 'three wounds' attaches to her familiarity with the life of Saint Cecilia, one of the most famous of the Roman martyrs who, when

wound of 'true contrition', the wound of 'kind compassion' and the wound of 'deep longing for God'. Contrition is the deep and sincere sorrow for one's sins, arising from love for God and a desire to amend one's life. Kind compassion is the feeling of genuine empathy and love for others, sharing in their joys and sufferings, reflecting Christ's compassion for humanity. Deep longing for God denotes an intense, unquenchable desire for union with God, a yearning to draw closer and to experience his presence fully.

Julian tells us that she had requested the first two gifts under the condition that they *be granted if this be God's will* (LT2.4). As LT3 opens, and Julian recounts her illness, she clearly means the reader to accept the inference that her illness comes from God in satisfaction of her wish to have it.

3 ~ *The Small Thing*

As Julian opens LT5, she refers back to her vision of the bleeding head of 'our good Lord [Christ]', telling us now that as she watches the head, Christ had shown her a 'spiritual vision' of his 'homely loving', and saw that he is 'everything that is good and comforting that helps us' (LT5.1) – not that God brings good and comforting things to us, but that God is *identical* with what is good and comforting. This is his essence and nature. And he is so close to her, with her in her conscious experience,

---

put to death, after being struck three times on the neck with a sword, lived for a further three days, at which point she asked the pope to convert her home into a church. The rood screens of East Anglian churches were during this period commonly decorated with paintings of St Cecilia (Fr John-Julian 1988, 68).

that he is best described as clothing that wraps her, his love winding around her, embracing her, and doing so permanently. She expresses herself in the plural ('He is *our* clothing ...'), showing to her reader that what she feels, what she knows about herself in the midst of her encounter, is actually true of everyone, all the time, even though they may neither experience this truth nor have any notion of it.

And now she sees her palm held out before her (LT5.2) – not the palm of her sick body actually lifting from her bedclothes, for what she sees is opened by God in the mystical space of her encounter, where what she sees is not so much objects, but what they signify and mean.

In her palm she sees a 'little thing, seeming no larger than a hazelnut'.[19] A moment's query as to what this thing is, is immediately replaced by her understanding that it is 'all that is made'. It is the entirety of God's creation. What her human capacity for seeing things shows her (in this case just a little thing lying in her palm) is replaced by God's way of seeing things. And if she is seeing through God's vision, then God's hand and her hand are the same hand. Through God's way of seeing, the little thing is apprehended as the entirety of everything. And everything exists because God loves it: God's love holds it in its being.

Julian's vision reaches its profoundest depth here, as she comes to understand not only the closeness of God but also the nature of all creation in relation to divine love. The smallness

[19] Many commentators down the years have referred to this small thing *as a hazelnut*. This is not what Julian says; the small thing seems *no larger than a hazelnut*, not actually a hazelnut.

of the ball-like object in her palm, which represents all that is made, emphasises both the fragility and the preciousness of existence. It is not through her own sight, but through God's, that she perceives this truth: that everything is held together by love, sustained by it, and cannot exist apart from it. This vision reveals the radical dependence of creation on divine love – not as a distant, external force, but as the very essence of being itself.

Her mystical insight offers a universal assurance: just as God is intimately present with her, wrapping her in love like clothing (LT5.1), so too is he present with all people, at all times, whether they recognise it or not. The vision does not merely affirm God's love as a benevolent attribute but as the fundamental reality in which all things exist. In this, Julian moves beyond personal revelation to a cosmic truth – one that reassures, comforts, and ultimately invites all her *even cristen*[20] readers to rest in the knowledge that they are forever held within the infinite embrace of divine love.

4 ~ *Sin*

The notion of sin,[21] one of the most important themes that Julian discusses, is mentioned at intervals throughout the *Showings*. It was of course one of the major topics in the Christian tradition, and it remains so to this day. The theology of Julian's time

[20] Julian uses the expression *even cristen* several times, more frequently in the ST than in the LT, by which she means her fellow-Christians.

[21] Sin translates the Hebrew term *chata*, חָטָא (meaning to go astray, miss the mark, make an error) and the Greek term *hamartia*, ἁμαρτία (meaning to miss the mark, to fall short, as when shooting an arrow, hence fail, err, sin).

emphasised 'original sin', a concept first systematically developed much earlier by Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430)[22]. Original sin derives from the story of Adam and Eve which appears at the very beginning of the Jewish scriptures at Genesis 3 in the Torah (by the 1st century AD this was available to early Christians, included in the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures, the Septuagint,[23] and later incorporated into what would become the Old Testament of the Christian Bible).

The doctrine of original sin states that humanity has inherited a fallen nature from Adam and Eve's disobedience – the Fall – in the Garden of Eden. This inherited condition is characterised by a predisposition to sin, separation from God, and susceptibility to suffering and death. This is not simply a matter of inheriting the guilt of the original sin established by that first act of disobedience, but a having at one's core a corrupted human nature that makes moral goodness difficult in the face of

[22] Augustine develops his doctrine of original sin at several places: *Confessions* (reflecting on human sinfulness and divine grace), *The City of God* (discussing sin's effect on human history), *On Nature and Grace* (refuting Pelagianism), and *Against Julian* (defends original sin against Pelagian arguments) ... the latter title references Julian of Eclanum (c. 386–c. 455) who was a bishop and leader of the Pelagian movement in the 5th century.

[23] The Septuagint included not only the books of the Hebrew Bible but also other Jewish writings, such as the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, and additions to Esther and Daniel. These books were later excluded from the Jewish canon but were retained in Christian traditions until the Reformation, when many Protestant denominations including Calvinists (followers of John Calvin), also rejected the Deuterocanonical books – referring to them collectively as the Apocrypha – leading to their exclusion from most Protestant Bibles.

a predisposition to evil that is always prompting sinful actions. All generations of human beings have, from that time, lived in a state of permanent exclusion from the paradise of Eden, each of us burdened *now* by the punishments that God first meted out to Adam and Eve (Gen 3:16–19). In this tradition, all the suffering in the world has its origin in that single act of disobedience.

The Early Church Fathers, including Augustine, shaped the doctrine by emphasising humanity's corruption through sin and the necessity of divine grace for salvation. While interpretations vary within Christianity, the fundamental idea of inherited human brokenness originating from the Fall remains central to the doctrine of original sin,[24] and for many Christians, the point of religious observances and practices is to find a way to avoid the fate of where this brokenness will send them – to eternal damnation in Hell – unless remedial action is taken as a matter of determined urgency. Such Christians consider that somehow they have to earn God's favour to avoid the default outcome of a life lived in sin: this will be God's condemnation of the sinner to eternal torment in Hell.

Against this unpromising background, Julian's understanding of sin is one of the most distinctive and transformative

[24] For instance, *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, written in the 1640s during the English Civil War, is one of the most influential doctrinal standards in Protestant Christianity, particularly within Presbyterian and Reformed traditions. The Confession holds that through their original sin, Adam and Eve's guilt and corrupted nature are passed down to all their descendants. Consequently, humanity is now completely unable to do good and is naturally inclined towards evil. This is the doctrine of *total depravity*.

aspects of her theology. While the prevailing theological climate of her time often framed sin in terms of guilt, punishment, and the fear of eternal damnation, Julian offers a profoundly hopeful and compassionate perspective. For her, sin is not the final word in the human story but is instead situated within the broader context of God's infinite love, mercy, and providential care. Her perspective offers a radical departure from the fear-based theology of her time, emphasising instead the transformative power of divine love to heal, restore, and bring all things to their ultimate fulfilment in God.

Julian has seen throughout her Showings[25] that all things have their being through God's caring love (LT5.2/8) and that 'all things that are done are done well, for our Lord God does everything'[26] (LT11.3), that 'God is nothing but goodness' (LT46.3), and God himself commits no sinful deed, 'I was sure that he does no sin' (LT11.4). Here we have a problem, because if all that is done is in fact done *well* by a caring God[27] who is 'nothing but goodness', we are pressed to accept that evils and

[25] We use *Showings* to refer to Julian's book, and Showings (in regular type) to refer to Julian's encounters with God.

[26]This implies that Julian accepts the Thomistic doctrine that God is the ultimate cause of all things, meaning that everything that exists, including all actions and events, ultimately derives its being and power from God; essentially, 'God does everything' in the sense that he is the primary source of existence and activity in the universe, even though created beings can act with their own agency within the framework of God's will. Cf. 'all things that are done [are] attributed to God's doing ... for there is no doer but he' (LT11.5).

[27] See for instance LT15.3, 'God wishes us to know that he cares for us' and LT39.2, 'our good Lord takes care of us': see also LT40.1, 52.2/3, 53.4, 55.2, 78.1, 79.3, 82.3.

sufferings have their origins in God, despite the fact that God himself does not or cannot do anything sinful that causes harm. (The branch of theology that addresses the problem of how God can at the same time be all-loving yet also permit evil and suffering to blight the creation is referred to as *theodicy*,[28] though Julian would not have heard that expression.)[29]

Sin, for Julian, appears to have a much broader connotation than just the bad or wicked deeds performed by people. The term *sin* also includes the harms that result from sinful deeds, harms suffered by others as well as the harms that accrue to the sinning person (these are all 'moral evils'). And because she remarks that sin is 'all that is not good ... [it] is the cause of all suffering' (LT27.2/3), she appears also to include in the concept of sin 'natural evils', such as the harms that result from illness and injury, famine and flooding, and all manner of calamities that have their root causes in natural processes.[30]

---

[28] The term 'theodicy' derives from the Greek words *theos* (God) and *dike* (justice), meaning 'justifying God'.

[29] 'Theodicy' was first coined by the German philosopher and mathematician Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in 1710, in his work *Essais de Théodicée sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberté de l'homme et l'origine du mal* (*Essays on Theodicy: On the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man, and the Origin of Evil*). Leibniz used the term to describe his attempt to reconcile the existence of evil and suffering with the belief in an all-powerful, all-knowing and wholly good God. His work is one of the most famous and systematic attempts to address the problem of evil, and the term 'theodicy' has since become a standard part of philosophical and theological discourse.

[30] We may note further that some natural evils may be exacerbated by human activity, such as someone's failing in their responsibility to care properly for a sick person.

Hence Julian's reflection (at LT27.1) that if God had prevented sin from coming into the world, then 'all would have been well'. In her encounter, Jesus is present to her thoughts, and he provides a response to her query, telling her (at LT29.2), 'Sin is inevitable.'[31] Somehow or other, sin is an essential component in God's creation, and is in fact required, in the fullness of time, for all to be well.

This account presents a profound reimagining of sin's role within God's providential plan. While Julian acknowledges sin as inherently evil and destructive, she situates it within the broader framework of divine love and wisdom. For her, sin does not ultimately separate humanity from God, but instead reveals the depth of divine mercy and the transformative power of grace. She does not suggest that God wills sin, but rather that God permits it as part of a greater plan – one that leads to the restoration and healing of creation. Thus, though sin remains a painful and tragic aspect of human existence, Julian sees it as mysteriously necessary for the fulfilment of God's purposes.

This is the context within which Julian pushes the boundaries of orthodoxy, revealing God's counterintuitive truth, that sin is ultimately, somehow, rewarded:

> And God showed that sin shall be no shame to man, but to his honour, for just as every sin receives its appropriate punishment, so for every sin the same soul receives a loving joy. Just as various sins merit various punishments depending on

[31] Translating *behovely*, necessary, fitting, appropriate or expedient, meaning in this context that sin *of necessity must occur* and is thus inevitable yet, somehow, expedient.

> how serious they are, just so shall they be rewarded in Heaven with various joys in accordance with how much pain and sorrow they caused the soul on earth, for each soul that comes to Heaven is so precious to God, and the place so honourable, that the goodness of God never allows any soul that sins to come there unless that sin is rewarded and made known without end, and blissfully restored by surpassing glory.
>
> (LT38.1)

Thus, Julian's theology of sin is, quite clearly, *profoundly hopeful*. As we shall reflect later, she insists that 'all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' (LT27.2), a refrain that has become one of her most famous and enduring contributions to Christian thought. This assurance is not a denial of the reality of suffering or evil, but a declaration of trust in God's ultimate goodness and sovereignty. Julian's vision reveals that sin, though it causes great harm, cannot thwart God's loving purposes. Instead, it becomes a means through which God's grace is magnified, as divine love works to redeem[32] and

[32] In Christianity, to *redeem* means to rescue, buy back, or set free – often with the idea of a price being paid. Jesus is seen as *'the Redeemer'* because his death is understood to have paid the price for humanity's sins, freeing believers from the bondage of sin and death. Thus, *redemption* is the act of being saved from sin, evil, and damnation. It signifies the restoration of a person to a right relationship with God (being *righteous*), achieved through Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross. This concept is central to Christian beliefs about grace, forgiveness, and eternal life. Theologically, redemption is often linked to *atonement* – Jesus' sacrifice is seen as paying for human sin. Redemption is offered as a gift from God (referred to as

transform even the darkest aspects of human existence. In this way, Julian offers a theology of hope and consolation, reminding her readers that God's love is greater than sin and that, in the end, all things will be brought to their rightful fulfilment in God.

Julian's theology of sin challenges the fear-based teachings of her time, reframing sin not as a cause for despair, but as an encounter with God's boundless mercy. Against the prevailing emphasis on guilt and punishment – what we might in our own reflections fairly call a 'theology of torment' – she proclaims a God who is 'nothing but goodness' (LT46.3) and who works all things for good (LT11.3). For Julian, the final word belongs not to sin but to divine love, which holds even broken creation in an unbreakable embrace. In this way, her vision transforms sin from a mark of shame into a testament to grace, offering enduring hope to those wrestling with suffering.

5 ~ *No Wrath in God*

Julian remarks that 'there can be no wrath in God' (LT13.3, LT49.2/5).[33] This represents a bold and revolutionary teaching on Julian's part, one that directly challenges the recurring depictions of God's wrath found in many parts of the Old Testament

God's *grace*), not something people can earn for themselves. Being *free from sin* thus signifies release from sin's power and its eternal consequences (being permanently separated from God and being damned eternally to the torments of Hell).

[33] Julian discusses anger (translating *wrath/wroth*) at intervals across the *Showings*: LT13.3, 40.1, 45.2, 46.3, 47.1, 48.1/4, 49.2–5; especially at LT46–9.

and taught by 'Holy Church'. Her perspective confronts the prevailing theological outlook of her era, which often portrayed God as an angry judge. In this dominant view, the ultimate divine judgement on the Last Day determines whether each individual will be granted entrance into Heaven (where they will experience for all time the bliss of being in God's presence) or be condemned to an eternity of suffering and torment in Hell.[34] Julian's approach calls into question this narrow vision of divine justice, offering a significantly more nuanced and inclusive understanding of God's nature and judgement.

In a crucial text, Julian reminds us that Holy Church teaches that we deserve God's blame and anger because of our sin, and this she calls a 'lower judgement'. Yet God has shown her a 'higher judgement', that he assigns to us 'no manner of blame' (LT45.2). She must accept the truth of the higher judgement – it comes directly from God, after all – yet she cannot abandon the 'lower judgement' that God is wrathful. She seems to hold two contrary beliefs at the same time.

Julian is laying the facts before us, the fact of what the Church teaches and the fact of what God has shown her, and she invites her reader to make up their own mind. Clearly the whole weight of the *Showings* rejects the lower judgement. What the Church teaches must be false – but this she cannot state outright. Were she to do so, she would risk being pressed to recant, she would risk excommunication, or even torture and execution by fire. And that could spell the end of her *Showings*, which would be burned also, prevented from reaching her fel-

[34] David Bentley Hart (2019) refers to those who accept this latter possibly as 'infernalists'.

low Christians, who would continue to live in the darkness where God is wrongly thought of as wrathful, seeking retribution from all those who have sinned but failed to repent, or failed to repent to the desired standard.

This revelation that God assigns 'no manner of blame' is expanded further in the next chapter, where she writes that the very nature of God – that 'he is Good, he is Truth, he is Love, he is Peace' – makes it *impossible* for God to be angry (LT46.3).

And at LT47.1, Julian tells us that the teaching she has received (she means religious instruction from the Church) explains that God's mercy and forgiveness provide for 'the remission of his anger'. Yet here also, again, she explains that she cannot find God's anger 'anywhere in all the Showing'. In the next chapter, Julian takes a slightly different tack, suggesting that anger 'is nothing else but a rebelliousness and an opposition to peace and to love'. And this arises from 'lack of strength or lack of wisdom or lack of goodness'. But since God cannot lack any of these attributes, God therefore cannot be angry. Indeed, it is the anger of people 'that is diminished and dispelled by God's mercy and forgiveness', not the anger of God that needs to be dispelled (LT48.1).

Furthermore, we wouldn't even exist if God were to be angry (LT49.2). For Julian, our being is entirely dependent on God's continuous act of love. If God were to withhold or revoke that love, which anger might imply, creation itself would cease to exist. Moreover, although the anger and waywardness that we exhibit cause us to 'suffer tribulations, distress and misery', nevertheless, *at the same time* 'we are kept secure and safe through the mercy of God' (LT49.4).

Julian's revelation that 'there can be no wrath in God' stands

as a profound and transformative insight, one that redefines our understanding of divine justice and mercy. By rejecting the notion of an angry, punitive God, Julian invites us to embrace a vision of God as wholly good, loving, and peaceful – a vision that aligns with her mystical experience of God's sustaining presence. Her delicate balance between the Church's teachings and her own Showings reflects not only her theological courage but also her pastoral care for her readers, urging them to move beyond fear and towards a deeper trust in God's boundless love. Ultimately, Julian's *Showings* offer a radical invitation: to see God not as a figure of wrath, but as the source of all being, whose mercy upholds our presence in the creation even in our waywardness, and whose love ensures our eternal safety. Through her words, Julian illuminates a path away from the darkness of fear and into the light of divine compassion.

6 ~ *Two Views*

Julian presents an intriguing and deeply significant insight: '... God looks at things one way, and man looks at things in another' (LT52.7). We have already come across this idea in Julian's experience of the 'small thing' (LT5) where she sees through God's vision the entirety of everything take on the utter simplicity of a small ball whose creation and continued existence is dependent upon God's love. This is, of course, not the human view. For us, creation is a multiplicity of phenomena, characterised by a seemingly infinite variety and breathtaking complexity, all interacting in an ongoing, dynamic process. Each event unfolds in relation to others, forming an intricate network of causal relationships, patterns, and emergent

structures that shape the evolving nature of reality within which our lives are embedded and where our actions try to find purchase.

This contrast between the divine and human perspectives highlights a fundamental epistemological distinction. While the human mind perceives reality through differentiation, categorisation, and causal analysis, Julian was shown that God's vision transcends such fragmentation, apprehending creation as a unified whole sustained by love. This difference in perception is not merely a philosophical curiosity but has profound theological and existential implications. If, from God's perspective, all things are held together in a singular, cohesive reality, then distinctions that seem essential to human understanding such as time, space, and even suffering may ultimately be illusory or at least, somehow, secondary to a deeper, unifying vision.

The gulf between man's view and God's view is illustrated by Julian in her remark that God wants us to *turn from* our 'blind judging' of how things are to behold God 'and all his works in general', seeing in this new vision that 'they are full of goodness' (LT11.5). Julian continues in the same paragraph, observing that from man's point of view some deeds are judged to be good, whilst other deeds are judged to be evil. This is a fact of life that we all experience everyday: whether through malice or clumsiness, the failure of good intentions or sheer stupidity, some people sometimes carry out actions that are indeed (it seems) genuinely hurtful, maleficent, or otherwise harmful to our flourishing, then – at the other end of the scale – some other actions are genuinely beneficial, supportive and conducive to our prospering and living well. Yet, however astonishing this must seem to some, Julian tells us that in God's view, the dis-

tinction we make between deeds done well and deeds that bring harm is *not* a distinction that God makes, for 'our Lord considers them not so' (LT11.5).

Julian's insight challenges us to reconsider our fundamental assumptions about morality, reality, and divine providence. If, in God's view, all things are held together in goodness, beyond the imperfect judgements of human understanding, then our grasp of right and wrong, success and failure, well-being and woe must be incomplete or even misguided. This does not negate the reality of suffering or wrongdoing as we experience these things, but it invites us to trust in a divine wisdom that sees beyond the immediate appearance of things. Julian's vision issues a call to humility, inviting us to acknowledge the limitations of our judgements and to orient ourselves towards the unifying love by which God sustains all creation – and sustains each one of us within that creation.

EXCURSUS C ~ *From World to Anchorhold*

The practice of anchoritic life,[35] or voluntary religious solitude, has ancient roots that can be traced back to the early centuries of Christianity. Anchorites[36] emerged as part of the broader ascetic movement that began in the third and fourth centuries, particularly in the deserts of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. This movement was characterised by individuals seeking a life of

[35] Duffy 2006, 297–99; Rolf 2013, 186–8.

[36] The term anchorite comes from the Greek ἀναχωρητής (*anachoretes*), itself derived from the verb ἀναχωρειν (*anachorein*), meaning 'to withdraw', 'retire'.

extreme devotion, prayer, and separation from the world to achieve spiritual purity and closeness to God.

The high medieval period of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries saw a peak in the popularity of anchoritic life, particularly among women.[37] This era also saw the development of more structured rituals for enclosure, as well as increased support from the Church and local communities. Anchorites were often seen as spiritual intercessors, and their lives of devotion were deeply respected.

At the time when Julian took up the calling of anchoress in the late fourteenth century, the process by which an anchorite or anchoress would have been enclosed in their anchorhold was a solemn and highly ritualised event, symbolising their withdrawal from the world to devote themselves entirely to prayer and contemplation. This act was not simply a personal choice but required ecclesiastical approval[38] and a formal ceremony.

Before being enclosed, a prospective anchorite or anchoress underwent a period of discernment, often guided by a bishop or other spiritual advisor. They had to demonstrate deep religious conviction and the ability to endure a life of strict asceticism. Many followed the guidance found in texts such as the *Ancrene Wisse*, a rulebook for anchoresses that recounted their way of life in some considerable detail.[39] Once deemed suitable,

---

[37] Statistical analysis shows that women outnumbered men in the thirteenth century by more than 3:1. See Warren 1985, 18–29.

[38] For almost all those seeking enclosure, the approval and continued support of their diocesan bishop would have been required. See Jones 2019, 15–17; Hughes-Edward 2010, 143–4; Clay 1914, 90–1.

[39] See Millett 2009. The *Ancrene Wisse* (or *Ancrene Riwle*), written in the early 13th century, is a guide for anchoresses, offering spiritual and prac-

the prospective anchoress had to secure the support of a patron – possibly their sponsoring bishop, but often their local priest or a nobleman – to provide financial support for their long-term sustenance. On probably rare occasions, some anchoresses would have been able to fund their own enclosure from an inheritance or the sale of property.[40]

The enclosure itself was a liturgical event, resembling a funeral to symbolise the anchorite's 'death to the world'. It typically took place at the parish church or monastery where the anchorhold was built, usually attached to the church itself (though some anchorholds were located next to gardens for growing vegetables).[41] The anchorite would attend a final Mass, receive the Eucharist, and make their vows before the bishop or local clergy.

Following this, the anchorite processed to their anchorhold, often while hymns or Psalms were sung. Upon entering, they would receive a final blessing, and then the entrance to their cell was either bricked up or secured with a heavy door, leaving only

tical advice for their enclosed lives. It emphasises devotion, humility, and obedience, structuring daily life around prayer, meditation, and manual labour. The text outlines rules for behaviour, including modesty, fasting, and avoiding gossip, while providing guidance on managing relationships with servants and visitors. It also addresses inner spiritual struggles, such as temptation and despair, encouraging reliance on God's grace.

[40] As may have been the case for our anchoress at the church of St Julian at Norwich had she been Lady Julian Erpingham. See Excursus A, above.

[41] See for instance Jones 2019, 43, 50–1.

small openings for food, confession, and communication with the outside world.[42]

Once enclosed, the anchorite lived in near-total solitude, with their days dedicated to prayer, meditation, and perhaps giving spiritual advice to visitors through a small window. Sometimes, for those whose anchorholds were attached to a church, they had a restricted but essential connection to the church, typically with a view of the altar for observing Mass.[43] Their enclosure was considered both a sacrifice and a holy calling, and many were revered as living saints.

While the enclosure was intended to be permanent, some anchorites did leave their cells under extraordinary circumstances, such as extreme illness or if they were deemed unfit for the vocation. However, for most, this was a lifelong commitment – one they undertook with the belief that their solitude brought them closer to God.[44]

---

[42] Clay 1914, 94–5.

[43] Anchorites and anchoresses received Holy Communion, the consecrated Host, through the window or aperture of their anchorhold. This *fenestella* (Latin for 'little window'; sometimes referred to as a 'squint') allowed them to observe the liturgy and receive the Eucharist directly from the priest, maintaining their sacramental connection to the church despite their enclosure. For anchorholds not attached to a church, a priest would visit the anchorhold to administer the Eucharist, typically bringing the consecrated Host from the church.

[44] For more on the anchoritic life, see for instance Jones 2019, Warren 1985, and Hughes-Edwards 2010.

7 ~ *Christ's Suffering – Passion and Crucifixion*

Julian's *Showings* portrays Christ's suffering as an expression of God's boundless love, emphasising intimacy and compassion, rather than viewing it solely as a payment for humanity's sins, as traditional views of redemption through divine justice usually do; instead, her mystical experience reveals Christ's Passion[45] as a timeless, universal expression of love for all people, across all time.

Her descriptions of the Passion[46] vividly depict both Christ's physical agony and its spiritual significance, further illuminating her vision of the Crucifixion as a profound act of divine love. Julian observes Christ's suffering with a sense of familiarity and immediacy, yet also perceives it as an act of love that is, in fact, joyful. She tells us: 'With a cheerful face and looking on with joy, our good Lord gazed into his side ...' (LT24.1),[47] disclosing that the Crucifixion is not merely a pain-

[45] In the Christian tradition, the Passion refers to the suffering, Crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, beginning with the Last Supper and his betrayal by Judas, followed by his arrest, trial before Pontius Pilate, scourging, and carrying of the Cross. It culminates in his Crucifixion at Golgotha, his death on the Cross, and his burial.

[46] Starting at LT4.1 and picked up again at LT7.23, 12.1, 16, 20.1/4, 21; see also 23.2.

[47] Gazing into the wound in his side, inflicted in order to pierce Jesus' heart to make sure that he had indeed died. This wound was made by one of the Roman soldiers present at the Crucifixion (Jn 19:31–37). The apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus names this Roman soldier as Longinus. Though unnamed in the canonical Gospels, some traditions identify him with the centurion who declared Jesus the Son of God (Matt 27:54, Mk 15:39). Over time, he was portrayed as a convert to Christianity and is

ful necessity but a willing and joyful outpouring of love. This is affirmed by Jesus when he says to her:

> 'Are you satisfied that I suffered for you? ... If you are satisfied, I am satisfied. It is a joy, a happiness, an endless delight to me that I ever endured such suffering for you. *And if I might have suffered more, I would have suffered more.*'
>
> (LT22.1, italics added)

Through these passages, Julian reveals the Crucifixion as a transcendent expression of God's boundless love, where suffering and joy coexist in divine unity.

To expand her theology of Christ's Passion as a manifestation of God's unconditional love, she offers the metaphor of Christ as 'our clothing that wraps us in love ... so tenderly that he will never leave us' (LT5.1). This contrasts with legalistic or transactional views of sin and redemption, and instead presents the Passion as deeply personal and relational, drawing humanity into union with God.

Julian's emphasis on love over judgement is evident in her famous declaration: 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' (LT27.2). This reflects her understanding that Christ's Passion is not about punishment or divine wrath but the power of love to restore and reconcile. She reinforces this at the close of her *Showings* (LT86.2): 'Know it well. Love was his meaning. Who showed it to you? Love. Why does he show it to you? Out of love.' Julian insists that divine

---

venerated as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and several other Christian denominations.

love is a love so profound that it holds in its embrace even the darkest aspects of pain, suffering, grief and distress that are present, at intervals and over time, for everyone who comes into their human existence.

In brief, Julian's vision reimagines the Passion, shifting focus from sin, guilt and redemption to the overwhelming love of God. She presents the Crucifixion as an intimate, transformative event, not rooted in retribution but in the sheer generosity of divine grace. In doing so, she challenges rigid frameworks of sin and atonement, offering instead a vision of love that heals, restores, and ultimately ensures that 'all shall be well'.

8 ~ *Mankind's Suffering – Being in the World*

We already know, before coming to Julian, that suffering is a universal experience, touching every life, sooner or later, to one extent or another. For some, suffering is ever-present, unrelenting, and seemingly without purpose, whilst for others, it arrives in waves – intense but intermittent, allowing moments of respite. And some lucky few find their lives blessed with hardly any suffering at all; but even for the blessed, some suffering will inevitably, in the end, come to them.

From the perspective of her Showings, Julian sees that human suffering, however absurd it might seem to many, is actually part of God's loving plan for humanity. She presents human suffering not as God's will but as something contained within his unending love. As we have already seen, she asserts

that 'Sin [everything that is evil] is *behovely*'[48] (LT27.2), yet God permits suffering only to transform it – somehow, eventually – into something greater. And the refrain we are all familiar with, 'all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' (also LT27.2), encapsulates her trust in God's ultimate plan, even when suffering appears overwhelming.[49]

For Julian, our suffering is deeply connected to Christ's Passion. Her detailed and graphic visions of Christ's Crucifixion[50] reveal suffering as a means of participating in his transformative sacrifice. Christ's Passion is the ultimate expression of divine love, and Julian affirms that human suffering draws us closer to him: ' ... for the Passion of our Lord is a comfort to us against all this, for this is his blessed wish' (LT27.3). Through suffering, believers share in Christ's pain and ultimate victory: 'I understood that we are now, as our Lord intends, on the cross, dying with him in our pain and suffering' (LT21.1). And Christ, who is always with us, moment by moment, *shares in our pain*: his suffering was not confined to only the time of his Passion, but includes also the earlier miseries that he experienced by virtue of the fact that he lived as a human being, subject to all the usual pains and discomforts that befall all of us.

Julian also views suffering as a means of spiritual purification, leading to humility and dependence on God. She states, 'for he wants us to know that [our suffering] shall all be turned

[48] Meaning *necessary, inevitable, fitting, appropriate or expedient.* See Part 4, *Sin*, above.

[49] We will see in Part 9, *Two Deeds*, how Julian is presented with some degree of insight into how 'all shall be well'.

[50] See LT4.1, 7.2–3, 12.1, 16–21 (especially), and 23.2.

to honour[51] and to profit by virtue of his Passion' (LT28.2). This reflects the concept of *theosis*,[52] where believers are transformed to mirror God's character. Julian sees Christ's willing submission to suffering as the ultimate act of divine love, illustrating how human suffering, too, can become a path to sanctification.

A key aspect of Julian's theology is the assurance that God does not abandon humanity to its suffering. She employs maternal imagery to describe God's nurturing presence: 'As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother' (LT59.2/3).[53] Just as a mother safeguards her child, God is ever-present, sustaining believers even in their darkest moments: 'we suffer noth-

[51] In Julian's Middle English, *honour* (from Old French *honor*, Latin *honor*) had a broad and deeply significant meaning, encompassing ideas of virtue, reputation, and social standing. Here, she is emphasising the dignity and respect that God owes to us in consequence of the suffering we have endured throughout our lives. Whatever we are owed, what Julian refers to as 'profit', something that benefits us and something we want to have, will come to us as a gift from God on the Last Day (see Part 9, *Two Deeds*, below).

[52] *Theosis* (Greek *θέωσις*) is the process of becoming united with God, participating in his divine nature, as emphasised now in Eastern Orthodox Christianity. It is often described as deification or divinisation, where humans, by grace, grow in holiness and likeness to God. If Julian was not familiar with the term, she was certainly acquainted with the concept, since she talks a great deal about the significance of being 'oned with God' (i.e., becoming one with God). She writes, for instance, that ' ... we should know the fruit and the end of our prayer ... is to be united with and be like our Lord in all things' (LT42.1). See also: LT19.4, 40.1, 41.4, 43.5, 45.1, 46.3, 49.1/5, 51.7, 53.2/4/5, 55.4, 56.1/2, 57.2/3, 58.1/5, 61.6, 68.5, 78.1, 80.3; ST4.3, 10.6, 19.8, 22.3.

[53] See below, Part 10, *God as Mother*.

ing alone, but with him' (LT28.2). Julian emphasises that Christ suffers not only *for* humanity but *with* humanity, reinforcing God's intimate involvement in human struggles.

Despite the fact of our suffering, Julian maintains that it is temporary, whereas God's love is always present, for all of time. She reassures readers in LT27.2/3 and LT31.1 that 'all shall be well,' foreseeing the ultimate resolution of suffering in God's love. In LT85.2, she describes a vision of Heaven where divine love triumphs over pain: 'when the judgement is given[54] ... we shall all say with one voice, "Lord, blessed may you be, for it is thus, and it is well."' This eschatological[55] hope sustains her belief that suffering is neither meaningless nor permanent.

Julian acknowledges the paradoxical relationship between suffering and joy. She experiences moments of profound spiritual peace, yet also endures despair (LT15.1). She observes that patient endurance of suffering can deepen one's sense of divine grace: 'God wishes us to know that he cares for us, that he keeps us safe always, both in woe and in well-being' (LT15.3). Ultimately, she accepts that suffering is a mystery, beyond full comprehension, yet firmly trusts in God's wisdom.[56] Her writings

[54] i.e., on the Last Day, the Day of Judgement.

[55] Concerning the final events in the history of the world or of humanity, often referred to the 'end times', the time when the Last Judgement is supposed to occur, studied by theologians under the heading *eschatology*: from the Greek word *eschatos* (ἔσχατος), meaning 'last' or 'final'.

[56] Julian, as we might expect, talks a great deal about having trust in God. She writes that 'he wants us to trust him' (LT10.10) and that she was 'taught that we should rejoice only in our blessed saviour Jesus, and trust in him for everything' (LT30.3). She reminds us that '... our Lord is with us, watching over us, and leading us into the fullness of joy, for our Lord

offer not easy answers but enduring hope, affirming that God's love will triumph over all sorrow. In her concluding vision, Julian reiterates her central conviction one last time that 'all shall be well', assuring her readers that divine love will transform suffering into eternal joy. But for now, in this life of suffering, Julian understands that God is telling her, not that we won't face tribulations that trouble us, pain us and bring down distress upon us, but that we 'shall not be overcome' (LT68.7) because we can hold to the truth that through it all, we can trust in God's love.

EXCURSUS D ~ *Julian's Norwich*

By the late fourteenth century, Norwich was one of England's largest and most prosperous cities, second only to London in wealth and importance.[57] Its economy thrived on wool and cloth production, trade, and the significant presence of its religious institutions, making it a vibrant yet deeply stratified urban centre. However, this period was also marked by profound upheavals – the Black Death and the Peasants' Revolt, most notably – which reshaped society and reinforced the Church's central role in daily life.

The Black Death reached Norwich in the spring of 1349, devastating its population. Contemporary records suggest that up to half the city's inhabitants perished, mirroring the cata-

---

intends this to be an unending joy for us, that he who shall be our bliss when we are there [on the Last Day] is our protector while we are here, our way and our Heaven, in true love and faithful trust' (LT77.5). (Some other mentions of trust occur at LT32.2, 61.6, 68.7, 71.1, and 74.5.)

[57] Ziegler 2009, 119; Rolf, 2013, 22

strophic losses seen across England.[58] The plague's recurrence in later decades[59] kept population levels low, leading to labour shortages and economic disruption.[60]

The Church played a crucial role in responding to the crisis. Norwich's many religious institutions – including its cathedral, friaries, and parish churches – provided spiritual and practical aid. Priests administered last rites, while monasteries distributed alms to the destitute.[61] Yet the clergy themselves were not spared; the death of many priests created a shortage of educated men to fill ecclesiastical roles, temporarily weakening the Church's administrative grip.

The labour shortages that followed the plague shifted economic power slightly toward the lower classes. Serfs and peasants, now in higher demand, could command higher wages, undermining the feudal system.[62] This tension between landowners and workers would later contribute to the unrest of the Peasants' Revolt.

Despite these upheavals, the Church remained Norwich's most dominant institution. The Cathedral Priory of the Holy

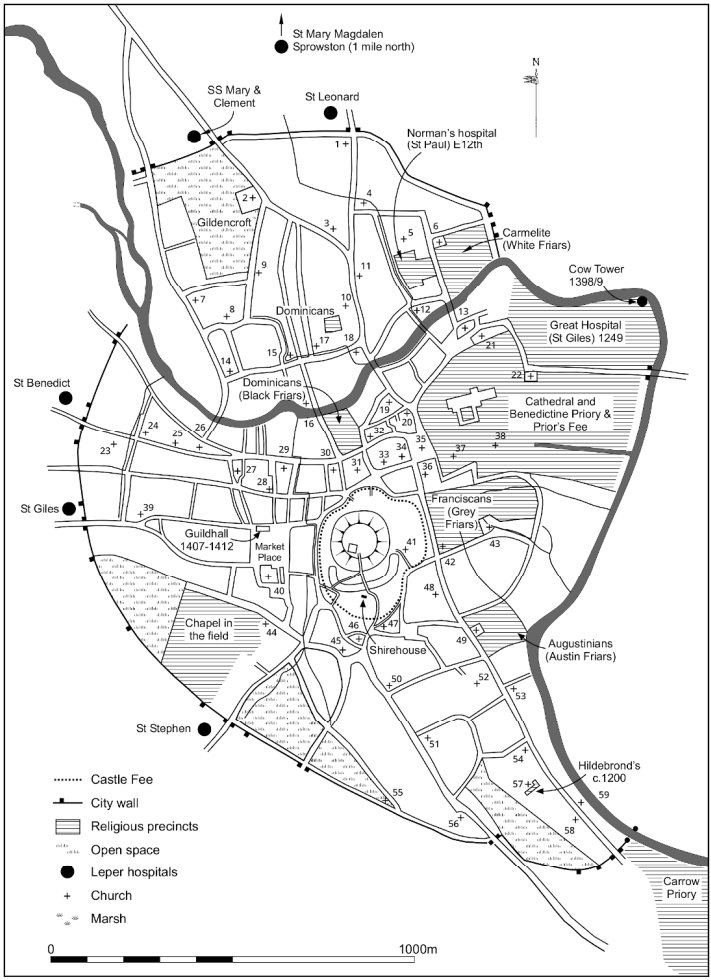
[58] Rolf 2013, 68.

[59] The Black Death returned to Norwich in 1361–1362 during its second major national outbreak (the *pestis secunda*), and struck again in 1369 (third wave), in 1375 (localised recurrence), and 1390–1391 (final 14th-century wave).

[60] Dyer 2002, 268.

[61] Rolf 2013, 76.

[62] Dyer 2002, 278–9. For more on feudalism and medieval economy, see especially Hilton 2003.



Map of Late Medieval Norwich

The dominance of the Church in medieval life is evident in the sheer number of churches and the scale of their precincts within the city. Julian's Church of St Julian is number 52, in the south of Norwich, about 150m from the River Wensum.
(Map from NPS Archaeology, used with permission.)

KEY TO CHURCHES

2 Augustine	27 Gregory
6 James	28 John the Baptist Maddermarket
7 Martin at Oak	30 Andrew
8 Mary Coslany	32 Peter Hungate
11 Saviour	33 Michael at Plea
12 Edmund	34 Mary the Less
13 Martin at Palace	39 Giles
14 Michael Coslany	40 Peter Mancroft
15 George Colegate	44 Stephen
18 Clement Colegate	45 All Saints Westlegate
19 Simon and Jude	46 John the Baptist Timberhill
20 George Tombland	48 Peter Parmentergate
24 Swithin	52 Julian
25 Margaret Westwick	54 Etheldreda
26 Laurence	56 John and the Holy Sepulchre

Trinity,[63] seat of the powerful Bishop of Norwich, controlled vast lands and wielded significant political influence.[64] In addition, the city hosted several friaries – Dominican, Franciscan, and Carmelite – that served the urban poor through teaching, almsgiving, and religious instruction. Religious life permeated daily routines, and guilds (which regulated trades) sponsored Church festivals and often had patron saints.[65] The wealthy merchant class demonstrated piety through donations to reli-

[63] The Cathedral Priory of the Holy Trinity in Norwich was a Benedictine foundation, founded in 1096 by Bishop Herbert de Losinga.

[64] See for instance Harper-Bill and Rawcliffe 2004, 84; and Hilton 2003, 166.

[65] Rawcliffe and Wilson 2004, xxxiii.

gious houses, while ordinary citizens attended Mass in one of Norwich's many parish churches.[66] The Church also enforced social order, promoting obedience to hierarchy – a message that would be tested during the Peasants' Revolt.

The Peasants' Revolt, starting in May 1381,[67] though primarily associated with London and south-eastern England, also reached Norwich. The rebellion was fuelled by resentment over poll taxes, feudal obligations, and the Statute of Labourers of 1351, which tried to cap wages despite post-plague labour shortages. In June 1381, rebels in Norfolk, led by Geoffrey Litster (a dyer from nearby Felmingham),[68] marched on Norwich. They targeted symbols of authority, including the city's elite and the Church. The rebels executed Sir Robert Salle (a knight who tried to mediate),[69] and ransacked properties of the wealthy, including those linked to the Bishop.[70] This was Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich between 1370 and 1406, who brutally suppressed the Peasants' Revolt around a week later,[71] defeating and capturing rebel leader Geoffrey Litster at North Walsham, where Litster was hanged, drawn and quartered. His

[66] For more on the churches of Norwich, see Finch 2004.

[67] Set in motion when violence erupted in Brentwood, Essex after royal officials began investigating those evading the poll tax: Ormrod 1990, 14; Dyer 2000, 192–99; McKisack 1959, 407; Rolf 2013, 150–55; Whittock 2009, 49. For the Peasants' Revolt in context, see Hilton 2003.

[68] McKisack 417–19, 420.

[69] Barker 2014, 334.

[70] Barker, 2014, 337.

[71] Le Despenser was an English nobleman, earning the epithet 'the Fighting Bishop' for his aggressive military campaigns. He later led a disastrous crusade in Flanders (1383), and vigorously opposed Lollardy. See for instance Oliver 2005, 279.

head was displayed at Norwich, probably on the walls or city gates, as a warning against further uprisings.

The Church's response to the Peasants' Revolt was ambivalent. While some clergy sympathised with the rebels' grievances, le Despenser and the monastic authorities ultimately supported the Crown's suppression of the revolt. The Church's alignment with the ruling class reinforced its role as a stabilising force, even as it faced criticism for its wealth and corruption.

Late fourteenth-century Norwich was, then, a city of contrasts. It thrived as a commercial and religious centre, yet faced severe challenges. The devastation of the Black Death and the economic and socials tensions that followed in its aftermath, seen most starkly in the uprising of the Peasants' Revolt, laid bare the fragility of Norwich's social order. Yet through it all, the Church retained its central role, simultaneously offering solace and reinforcing hierarchy. Its ability to balance spiritual stewardship with political control ensured stability even in turbulent times. By 1400, Norwich had begun to rebuild, its economy recovering, but its religious foundations remained unshaken, demonstrating the Church's lasting authority in shaping medieval life.

9 ~ *Two Deeds*

As we noted earlier (in Part 4, *Sin*, above), Julian 'often wondered why ... God had not prevented sin from coming into being. For then ... all would have been well' (LT27.1). In response, Jesus tells her that 'Sin is inevitable (*behovely*)' (LT27.2), that it must happen and be present in the history of the world, shaping the lives of those who dwell in the creation God has made.

And yet, given that suffering traces its path through every life, how are we to hold, with Julian, that all shall be well? When that final moment comes – when time yields to eternity – will we be able to receive, not just the promise, but the deep knowing that all is, and always has been, well? For do not the pain we have carried, and the memory of it, shape us in ways so closely woven into who we are that they are hard to separate from our very being? Yet might there come a time when we look upon all that we have carried and how that has formed us, and say in wonder, *'I see now that it was all right like that – it has always been absolutely all right'?*

In the same chapter, Julian glimpses

> ... hidden in God an exalted, marvellous mystery, whose secret he will openly reveal and make known to us in Heaven, in the knowing of which we will truly see the reason for his allowing sin to exist, in the seeing of which we shall have endless joy.
>
> (LT27.4)

This exalted mystery is not expanded upon for several chapters[72] where at LT32.3 it is now referred to as 'a deed which shall

[72] Though, possibly, the 'great thing' that God refers to at LT28.1 is indeed the 'great deed'. No further content is given here apart from God's stating that this great thing is 'a thing of endless honour and everlasting joy'. Julian has also made a fleeting reference at LT30.2 to something 'hidden', that God '[holds] back from us': it is present to God's 'privy council' and that 'it is right that the royal lordship of God should hold his privy councils in peace'. It is not appropriate for us *now* to seek for answers as to what this mystery is.

be done by the blessed Trinity on the Last Day'; and until it happens no one other than the Trinity will know what it is and how it is to be done.

And in the next paragraph (at LT32.4), this 'exalted, marvellous mystery', this 'deed which shall be done', is revealed as *the great deed*, by which God 'shall make all things well': 'For just as the blessed Trinity made all things from nothing, so the same blessed Trinity shall make well all that is not well.'[73] Even though we will not know what the deed is and how it is to be done until the Last Day, God does, however, show Julian what will result *from* the deed: in a much later chapter, God speaks to her, and tells her:

> Suddenly, you shall be taken from all your suffering, from all your sickness, from all your discomfort and from all your sorrow. And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss. And you shall never again have any manner of suffering, no manner of sickness, no manner of displeasure, no frustrating of desires, but forever joy and bliss, without end.[74] Why should it then grieve you to be patient for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?'[75]
>
> (LT64.2)

[73] Julian may mean to suggest that God's making all things well, eventually, on the Last Day, should be considered a second act of creation. This new state of affairs will simply come into being, in an instant, at the moment that we will all see for ourselves that all is well (Rolf 2013, 404).
[74] Furthermore, as we have already seen in Part 4, *Sin*, God will also encompass within the great deed *rewards* for our sins. See LT38.1.
[75] Cf. Rev 21:1–4.

Yet this promise – that one day all suffering will be undone – can feel thin when we are in the thick of pain ourselves, or when we see others grieving, aching, or afraid. Sin remains a mystery we cannot unravel; we must trust that it is *behovely* (somehow necessary and fitting) as God explains, but the why eludes us. The assurance of a future healing offers scant comfort in the midst of immediate anguish or dread. Julian grapples with this tension, declaring it 'impossible that all manner of thing should be well' – only for God to respond, 'What is impossible for you is not impossible for me' (LT32.5).[76] And so we cling to this: God, who holds all things in his hands – whose love will not falter, whose power knows no bounds – will somehow make all things well: God, after all, can make of his creation whatever he wishes. For Julian, we must suppose, this truth became an anchor. For some of us, it may become the very breath of faith. But for the one in the midst of suffering, such words may sound uncomfortably hollow, perhaps glib. Perhaps we can do no more than acknowledge the reality of suffering whilst trusting that its place within God's purposes, though hidden from us in the present, is not hidden from him.

Our task then, as we navigate our lives of well-being and woe,[77] is to wait patiently for the great deed that shall be done on the Last Day, at the point our lives wind down and count

[76] See Lk 18:2 6–7.

[77] Julian intermittently contrasts well-being and woe: see LT15.3, 19.3, ST11.1; see also LT64.1, 68.7, ST9.8, 22.5. For Julian, 'well-being and woe' are not opposites to be reconciled so much as they are coexisting realities in the life of faith that she lived and hoped to encourage in her readers. She presents well-being and woe as both intimately known by God and ultimately enveloped within divine love.

out their final moments. This is the point of transition when we will become conscious that all is well, when we directly apprehend the truth of everything, when we see how obvious it has always been, yet just beyond our grasp; that we have been united to God all along, from before the beginning, and that all that woe, although real at the times of our enduring it, is now seen as illusory, for now we are in the presence of that other view, of God's view of things, aware that it is God who is showing it to us. Everything, at last, makes complete sense.

Julian introduces us to a *second deed* at LT34.1, recounting that God showed her 'two kinds of secret'. Both will be kept concealed until God chooses to show them to us. The first is described as a 'great secret', which is evidently the *great deed* that we have just discussed, which will be revealed on the Last Day. The other kind of secret, Julian writes, 'comprises the secrets which he himself openly showed in this Revelation, for these are secrets that he wants to open and make known to us', that is, to Julian's fellow-Christians (*even cristens*) and to her readers ... *to us*.

The content of this second deed can be known, at least in part, by reading of it in Julian's *Showings*. It also comprises the teachings of Holy Church, as Julian states: ' ... most courteously our good Lord will show us [his secrets] through all the preaching and teaching of Holy Church' (LT34.1). But we should bear in mind that Julian's *Showings* have some content that extends beyond what the Church was teaching at this time, including the notions that 'God is our Mother', that sin is rewarded, that God cannot be angry, and that God will ultimately make all things well. That 'all shall be well' and that God cannot be angry, especially, constitutes a profoundly optimistic,

radical departure from Church teaching which emphasised the eventual condemnation of sinners to Hell in consequence of God's righteous wrath. We may notice also, that for the Church at this time, all non-Christians would also, inevitably, be consigned to Hell.[78] This cannot count in any sense at all as 'all being well' for sinners and non-Christians suffering eternal torment, and most certainly not for those who have the misfortune to be born into non-Christian cultures. It certainly isn't well with *them*.

Julian elaborates further (at LT36.1), referring to a 'deed that shall be done', and her reader can be forgiven for thinking that she has returned to her discussion of the *great deed*. That she has not, is made clear when she remarks:

> But this deed and that other one spoken of before, are not the same, but two different ones. But this deed shall be undertaken sooner, and shall be done when we come to Heaven and, to those whom the Lord imparts it, it may in some measure be known here [on earth], but the great deed spoken of before shall be known neither in Heaven nor [on earth] until it is done.
>
> (LT36.6)

The second deed – God's revealing himself in part to Julian in the Showings, and through her to her readers (albeit without the immediacy and direct apprehension of Julian's own encounter) – is said to be 'undertaken sooner' because it unfolds in the present, as we live our lives within the creation. It is partial be-

[78] See LT32.4, where Julian references the Church's attitude to 'Heathens'.

cause it does not grant us full awareness of God; that must await the great deed. Yet this partial revelation may help us cultivate patience[79] and temper the grief we feel over the world's suffering, even as its necessity remains beyond our understanding. Clearly, it helped Julian in her relationship with God. It took that relationship into new territories where the 'teaching of Holy Church' was not able to go. It may, for some of us, take us there, too.

10 ~ *God as Mother*

Julian's theology is derived from a living and breathing encounter with divine tenderness. That she did not receive merely a dry and doctrinal theology somehow implanted by God, but had a personal and deeply intimate encounter with the divine, is especially evident in her experience of God as Mother. In a world where God was often depicted as a distant judge or stern patriarchal figure, Julian dared to speak of Christ's 'courteous', 'homely' and nurturing love – a love like that of a mother for her child.

One of Julian's most striking insights is her depiction of God (sometimes Jesus) as Mother.[80] She does not discard tra-

[79] Meaning to reference LT64.2/6 = ST20.2/4; LT77.3, ST25.1.

[80] God as Mother occurs at LT52.1, 58.2–3, 59.2/3, 60.2/5; 62.2; Jesus/Second Person as Mother occurs at 58.3/4, 59.1/3/4, 83.3; and Trinity as Mother occurs at LT54.3, 58.4. Julian also refers to Holy Church as Mother at LT46.5, 61.6, 62.3. Notice that God as Mother is absent from the Short Text where the word 'mother' occurs twice, once denoting Mary, mother of Christ, and once Julian refers to her own mother.

ditional images of God as Father but extends them, revealing a divine love that encompasses both strength and gentleness. She writes: 'As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother' (LT59.2).

She finds this motherhood most vividly present in Christ's Passion. Just as a mother endures labour pains to bring forth new life, so Christ, in his agony on the cross, 'bore us to bliss' (LT60.3). His suffering is not only sacrifice but holy childbirth, delivering humanity into our homecoming in God.

As a mother feeds her child at her breast – so, Julian says, Christ nourishes us with his own body in the Eucharist. She writes:

> The mother may suckle her child with her own milk, but our precious Mother Jesus may feed us with himself, and does so most courteously and most tenderly through the Blessed Sacrament that is the precious food of true life.
>
> (LT60.4)

This is no abstract metaphor; it is actual, lived experience. God does not love from a distance but holds us close, as a mother cradles her infant. Even in sin and suffering, Julian insists, we are never abandoned, ' ... in [God] we are enclosed, and he in us' (LT54.3).

Julian's understanding of God as Mother is rendered in a real-life, practical context which revisits the topic of Christian theodicy and how we can understand the behovely nature of suffering in a world created by a God of love. She refers to 'the mother [who] may allow her child to fall sometimes and suffer in various ways for its own benefit' (LT61.5). Julian is imagining

the mother whose care for her child extends to giving it practical lessons about the world and its ways and how to respond to hardships with resilience and courage. Earthly mothers may sometimes fall short in their endeavours, and their child may even perish; but Christ our Mother never allows us, his children, to perish. All of life becomes a lesson of love[81] through which – and through even our pain and hardships – we learn to become who we truly are. This is what the good mother wishes for her child, and this is what God our Mother wishes for us.

The image of the child falling physically is extended in the remainder of Julian's paragraph at LT61.5 as a metaphor for our 'falling' into sin and thus feeling afraid[82] and ashamed. Instead of running away from God in fear – as many may do, having received the Church's teachings about sin and punishment, divine anger and Hell – Julian tells us that God our Mother wants us to *run to him* for comfort, just as a child runs to their mother when they are anxious or distressed.

This strand in Julian's vision – God as Mother – was radical for her time. The medieval Church spoke of God in overwhelmingly masculine terms, yet Julian quietly insists that divine love transcends gender. She does not reject God as Father but balances the image with one of maternal compassion.

Her theology is thus one of wholeness – a reminder that if we are made in God's image, and women bear life as mothers, then surely motherhood too reflects the divine.

---

[81] For the phrase 'lesson of love', see LT6.7, 79.3, 82.3; this expression does not occur in the Short Text.

[82] of God's condemnation, presumably, nodding towards the doctrine of original sin and the belief in divine punishment ... a view that her reader may hold, but which Julian, clearly enough, does not.

Julian's most enduring refrain, that 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' is not a naive optimism but a *mother's promise* – the kind of reassurance a child needs when frightened or in pain. A mother does not always prevent suffering, but she holds her child through it, whispering words of comfort. So too, Julian insists, does God offer to us all, always and persistently, words of comfort, if only we can hear them. Julian knows that most people, despite their desire, never do hear such words – some will even abandon their faith. So she took it upon herself to convey those words to us in the text of her *Showings*. And as a bottle bearing a message that is flung into the waves, we have chanced upon that bottle and in reading the message borne to us, we hear, if not the words themselves, a clear echo of them.

Julian's vision of God as Mother was not a theological abstraction but a lived reality – one that brought her profound consolation. For a world that often fears God's wrath, she offers a love that is as close as our own heartbeat, one as sure as a mother's embrace.

11 ~ *The Lord and the Servant*

In her 'example'[83] of the Lord and the Servant, which occupies the whole of LT51, Julian offers what is often regarded as her most theologically intricate and imaginative allegory. Unique in

[83] This is Julian's expression at LT51.1 (from the Latin *exemplum*) which was the term typically used to denote illustrations deployed in writings and sermons at this time. An author today may prefer an alternative, such as exegesis, analogy, metaphor, simile, illustration, allegory, parable, or exposition.

the corpus of medieval mystical literature, this Showing presents a profound meditation on the relationship between God and humanity, on sin and grace, and on the mysterious operations of divine love.

Julian describes two principal figures: a Lord, noble and serene, seated in peace; and a Servant, devoted and eager to do his master's bidding. The Servant jumps up and rushes off with such fervour that he immediately stumbles and falls into a ditch (*slade*). Badly injured and confused, he is unable to rise. There he lies, 'groaning and moaning, wallowing and writhing', all comfort gone because he can no longer look upon his loving Lord – who, in truth, is still seated nearby, watching him with unwavering affection (LT51.1–4).

The Lord, far from showing anger or disappointment, responds with compassion. He acknowledges the Servant's pain and promises him not only restoration, but a reward greater than if he had never fallen in the first place (LT51.4–5).

Julian tells us that for twenty years after this vision, she received an 'inner teaching' that brought deeper insight (LT51.8). This teaching revealed that the Servant is both Adam *and* Christ: both humanity in its entirety and in its fallenness, *and* Christ in his suffering.[84] Today, we might say this is Julian's way of accounting for the complexity and tragedy of the human condition.[85] This dual identity is not a rhetorical flourish; it is

[84] She means more than just Christ's suffering the passion of his Crucifixion. She means the suffering that came to him because he was experiencing the life of a human being, experiencing the same pain, distress and suffering to which we are all liable.

[85] And we have seen in our earlier discussions, pain, frustrations and woes of all sorts accompany each of us as we live our lives as human beings: if

central to Julian's theology, where the boundary between Christ and the soul of each person, and between sin and salvation, is imaginatively reconfigured.

The Lord is God the Father. The Servant is Christ in his incarnation and, at the same time, each and every fallen human soul.[86] The paradox at the heart of this vision – how the Servant can be both the one who falls and the one who saves – expresses Julian's audacious vision of divine love: that in becoming human, Christ joins himself to us so intimately that he shares in our fall in order to raise us up with him. He is with us now, in the ditch, bearing our pain as acutely as we experience it ourselves. The fall is not an accident to be regretted but the very condition that enables divine mercy to become manifest.

Julian does not deny the reality of sin or suggest it is unimportant, but she reframes it within a larger vision of God's purpose in which love supersedes judgement, and grace transforms human tragedy into the very occasion for deeper union with God.

Hers is a theology of gentleness, in which the fear of God's wrath is entirely absent. Julian's Lord is not a feudal tyrant ruling as humans are apt to do, but a figure of inexhaustible courtesy. The Servant is not merely a subject, but someone cherished and treasured – so beloved that even his fall becomes the impetus for a deeper intimacy with the divine that could not otherwise occur.

The allegory becomes, in effect, a theodicy in parable form;

---

suffering is not present at this very moment it will be, sooner or later.

[86] ' ... for in God's sight, all men are one man, and one man is all men' (LT51.8). Julian may have meant to allude to Rom 5.

a meditation on suffering that rejects the punitive picture of sin as the warrant for punishment and insists instead on divine compassion that precedes, accompanies, and ultimately transforms every human lapse. This is Julian's theology at its most tender and most daring – a glimpse into the divine drama in which 'all shall be well', and in which we shall each of us, one day, see that 'all manner of thing shall be well' (LT63.5).

Perhaps the most radical element of the parable is the way Julian collapses the distance between God and humanity's fallen state. In identifying the Servant both with Adam and with Christ, she proposes that God not only sees our suffering but shares directly in it. The fall into the ditch is no longer a mark of human disgrace (as in the traditional doctrine of original sin), but the very moment in which divine love enters our condition most deeply.

Julian's theology destabilises the idea of God as a detached observer or a cosmic accountant tallying up human faults. Her God is not indifferent to suffering but intimately involved in it – a tender portrait that challenges the doctrine of divine impassibility (the idea that God does not suffer).

This theology reorients the spiritual imagination. God is not a remote judge but a nurturing, patient mother; not the punisher of the fallen but their fellow sufferer and restorer. The Lord is still sovereign, but his sovereignty is revealed in compassion and solidarity. This vision, for those able to receive it, heals wounds made by the fear-based theology that has been so prevalent in the long centuries of Christendom's influence and opens a new path towards a deeper, more trusting and joyous relationship with the divine.

In the second part of LT51, the tone shifts and the imagery

deepens. Julian describes a haunting new scene in which we see the Lord sitting alone, still and silent, on a barren and empty plain. There is no house, no court; there are no servants – just the Lord, solitary and exposed on the open expanse (LT51.10).The earlier warmth of the Lord and Servant allegory, with its domestic and feudal overtones, gives way to a more austere, even apocalyptic vision. This image is theologically and emotionally dense. The Lord remains noble and serene, but now inhabits a desolate wilderness. The plain becomes a metaphor for divine vulnerability, for the cost of redemption, and for the steadfastness of love.

The Lord does not issue commands, seek comfort, or show distress. He simply waits. This stillness carries immense weight. Julian's God does not act with force or coercion, but with quiet fidelity. His aloneness does not portray his abandoning us, but emphasises his loyalty: he waits in the very place where the Servant fell. He waits in the desolation of the ditch. He does not withdraw his love – for if he did, creation itself would fall asunder and dissolve to nothingness.[87]

This image also bears strong Christological overtones. The solitary Lord on the plain may be read as Christ in his Passion – abandoned, vulnerable, waiting for the work of redemption to be completed. The empty plain suggests Golgotha or the desolation of the Cross. The Lord's solitude mirrors the Servant's

[87] See above, Part 3, *The Small Thing*, where we noted that all things have their existence through God's love, and Part 5, *No Wrath in God*, where we noted Julian's observation that were God to be angry and thereby withhold his love, the creation would cease to exist: 'For truly, as it seems to me, if God could be angry, even for a moment, we would have neither life nor dwelling nor being' (LT49.2).

fallen state, in the ditch alone and seemingly abandoned, revealing the deep solidarity between God and humanity.

This sparse image is not without its paradoxes. In the emptiness of the plain, Julian suggests a fullness of divine presence, for the Lord does not need spectacle, retinue, or even shelter and his solitude is not abandonment, but the quiet constancy of a love that refuses to leave, precisely because the beloved has fallen. The absence of place and company paradoxically reveals the immensity of the divine attention that is directed upon each of us, at every moment ... waiting ... waiting for our being lifted from the ditch into God's presence. If God's gazing out across the wasteland of his waiting is misconstrued as God gazing upon nothing, we will misunderstand the meaning of the image. God isn't gazing upon nothing; he is gazing upon everything.

Julian's vision resists the desire for easy consolation. The Lord's waiting is not inaction, but love in its purest form – patient, enduring and unhurried. This is Julian's eschatology: not a timetable for final events, but the assurance that time itself is held within God's loving patience, directed towards fulfilment and wholeness.

For Julian, this is the ultimate hope: not that suffering or sin will be avoided – we know that that can never be anyone's story – but that they will be transfigured. The divine patience embodied in the waiting Lord assures the reader that all things – however painful or perplexing – are held within the wide embrace of a love that never leaves us. And this, in the end, is why, in the face of ubiquitous suffering, Julian dares to declare, 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.'

EXCURSUS E ~ *Augustine's 'City of God'*

In *The City of God*, Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430) develops the concept of the city as a way of interpreting all of human history. He presents two symbolic and spiritual communities: the *City of God* (*civitas Dei*) and the *Earthly City* (*civitas terrena*). These are not geographical locations but metaphysical and moral realities, defined by the orientation of the will and the nature of one's love. The *City of God* is composed of those who love God above all else, whilst the *Earthly City* is formed by those who love only themselves.

This dual-city framework allows Augustine to interpret the decline of the Roman Empire not as a catastrophe but as part of the divine drama in which the visible world is not the final or highest reality. The two cities are intermingled in the present age – no political or religious institution maps perfectly onto either – but they will be separated in the final judgement. The *City of God* will endure eternally in communion with God, whilst the *Earthly City* will pass away.

Augustine's conceptual use of the city is cosmic, historical, and eschatological.[88] It explains the deep moral division running through the world and through each human heart, rooted in each person's choice of their ultimate object of love – God or themselves. The imagery of the city conveys a sense of order, purpose, and destiny – each city shaped by its central focus (love of God or love of self) and by its final goal: eternal communion with God or permanent separation from him. In this way, the image of the city becomes a means of understand-

[88] Concerning the final events in the history of the world.

ing divine justice, the character of human society, and the unfolding of God's purpose for humanity across time: the whole of human life as a spiritual drama centred on love's direction. Augustine writes,

> Two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self.
>
> (*City of God*, XIV.28, trans. Marcus Dods)

Through this lens, all history – its empires, conflicts, and crises – finds its meaning not only in outward events but in the hidden, inner desires and goals of history's participants; that is, in the moral character that each one of us has.

12 ~ *Julian's 'Soul as City'*

Unlike Augustine's cosmic and dualistic use of the city as representing two opposing communities, Julian transforms the city metaphor into an intimate image of the soul's relationship with God. She writes,

> [Here is] the city of God ... into which he enters and shall never leave, for God never leaves the soul in which he shall dwell blissfully without end. (LT55.3)

> Our good Lord ... showed me my soul in the middle of my heart ... so wide as if it were an endless citadel ... In the middle of that city sits our Lord Jesus ... [where] he rules and guards Heaven and earth and all that is. (LT68.1)

This city is not a distant place, one where we may hope to eventually live in the fullness of time, nor is it one marked by conflict or division, but is rather a sacred and beloved inner space, rich with God's gifts, constructed by divine grace; here we may enjoy the plenitude of human flourishing as God has always intended.

Julian's vision is deeply hopeful and tender. She emphasises that God's presence in the soul is permanent and unconditional: God will never leave the 'soul-city' at the core of our being, no matter how broken or sinful we may be. This reflects her radical theology of God's unconditional love – what she calls God's 'courteous love'. For Julian, God's love is not earned by personal merit nor withdrawn because of sin or failure; it is steadfast and ever-present, inviting every soul into intimate communion.

Central to Julian's theology is her hope that all souls will be '*oned*' with God – that is, united in perfect love and harmony. This oneness is not envisaged as a distant future promise, as many strands of the Christian tradition maintain, but begins here and now within the confines of each and every soul:

> Our Lord God dwells in us now, and is here with us, and calls us and encloses us out of tender love, so that he may never leave us and is more near to us than tongue may tell or heart may think.
>
> (LT71.8)

Julian writes that 'Our soul is made to be God's dwelling-place, and the dwelling-place of our soul is in God, and the soul is in God' (LT54.2), highlighting a mutual indwelling and a pro-

found spiritual unity. This hope shapes her understanding of sin and suffering: whilst acknowledging their reality, she insists they do not separate the soul from God's love – as the doctrine of original sin maintains – or thwart the ultimate union that God wills for everyone.

The city metaphor thus serves to affirm both the dignity and the destiny of the human soul. Like a well-built city full of streets, buildings, quiet squares, parks and magnificent buildings, the soul is complex and multifaceted, capable of housing the divine presence and allowing for spiritual growth. Rather than an external battleground of moral conflict typical of many actual cities at points in their varied and eventful histories, the soul-city is a sacred sanctuary of peace where God and human meet in joy. His delight in dwelling there conveys a relational intimacy that reimagines salvation not in legalistic or transactional terms, but as the confirmation of an unbreakable bond of love that has always been present; the love that holds us all in our being, that moment by moment creates the world into its ongoing existence.

In this way, Julian's use of the city metaphor offers a profound theological innovation. By placing the city of God, the place where he dwells forever, at the centre of each person's soul, she invites us to recognise God's love as unconditionally ever-present and life-giving, capable of transforming the soul from within and working to bring about the joyful hope that all shall be made one in God, all inconsistencies reconciled, all hopes fulfilled, all enmities ended.

EXCURSUS F ~ *Universal Salvation*

The doctrine of universal salvation, commonly termed *universalism* (and its adherents called *universalists*), was not the dominant view in the early Church, though it was present.[89]

Several early Christian theologians expressed ideas that align with universalism, though their views were often nuanced and sometimes contested. The most notable among them was Origen of Alexandria (d. *c.* AD 255), whose speculative theology included the possibility of the eventual restoration of all souls (*apokatastasis*). Origen argued that divine punishment was remedial rather than retributive, suggesting that even Satan might ultimately be reconciled to God. However, his teachings were later condemned by the Fifth Ecumenical Council (AD 553), which limited their influence in mainstream Christianity.

Other early figures, including Gregory of Nyssa (*c.* AD 335–395), also entertained universalist ideas, particularly regarding their reflections on God's infinite love and justice. Gregory held that Hell's torments were only temporary, serving to purify sinners before their eventual redemption. Similarly, Clement of Alexandria (*c.* AD 150–215) hinted at universal restoration, though he avoided dogmatic assertions.

Despite these examples, universalism was never the consensus position. Many early church fathers, including Tertullian and Augustine, strongly affirmed the doctrine of eternal punishment, interpreting biblical passages on judgement literally.

[89] For a detailed study of universalism in the early Church see especially Ramelli 2019. Her book addresses the entire period from Origen to Julian of Norwich.

Augustine's influence, in particular, solidified the dominance of eternal damnation in Western theology, expostulated in his doctrine of original sin.[90]

Early Christian universalism was often rooted in two key principles: the goodness of God and the belief in divine victory over evil. Universalists argued that an all-powerful, loving God would not permit eternal suffering, as it would imply either a limitation on divine mercy or an eternal dualism in which evil persists (present to those suffering the torments of Hell, obviously). Instead, they emphasised biblical passages suggesting universal reconciliation.[91]

Opponents, however, maintained that human free will necessitated the possibility of eternal rejection of God. They also cited scriptural warnings about everlasting punishment (e.g., Matt 25:46), interpreting them as definitive. The tension between God's justice and mercy thus became a central debate, with universalists prioritising mercy and their opponents emphasising justice.

Several factors contributed to the marginalisation of universalism in early Christianity. First, the institutional Church increasingly emphasised doctrinal uniformity, especially after

[90] See Part 4 and Excursus E, above.

[91] There are many. See for instance 2 Cor 5:19, '...that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them' (NIV); 1 Cor 15:22, 'For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.' The noun *apokatastasis* appears only once in the New Testament, at Acts 3:20–21, where the NRSV translation (for example) uses 'universal restoration' for the phrase in question. See for instance '76 Bible Verses To Support Universal Reconciliation' at bit.ly/4l58CSJ.

Christianity gained imperial support under Constantine (in the early fourth century). Origen's condemnation (in AD 553) illustrates this trend, and the unorthodox ideas of universalism were from that time suppressed. Second, the pastoral need to deter sin may have encouraged a focus on eternal punishment; if salvation was guaranteed, some feared moral laxity. Augustine's doctrine of predestination, though not accepted by all, further complicated universalist claims by asserting that salvation depended entirely on God's sovereign choice regarding who was predestined to be saved and who was not, and not on universal reconciliation. Furthermore, the lack of a unified universalist movement meant the view never gained systematic defence. While individual theologians down the centuries have explored the idea, it was never codified into a coherent alternative to mainstream eschatology.

The debate between universalism and exclusivism remains relevant today, reflecting enduring questions about divine justice, human freedom, and the scope of redemption.[92]

13 ~ *'Those who shall be saved'*

Julian uses the expression *'those who shall be saved'*, or close variations, at several points in the LT, and once in the ST.[93] At first sight, the phrase seems entirely conventional. In the language of her day, it usually referred to those destined for heaven

[92] See for instance Hart 2019, who mentions Julian, pp. 30–31.

[93] She uses 'those who shall be saved' eleven times (at LT9.1/2, 13.3/5, 15.4, 52.2, 57.1, 59.1, 75.2, 78.3 and ST6.5); and she uses variations on this, such as 'souls who are saved', five times (at LT13.2, 35.3, 39.2, 53.5 and 54.1).

– the community of those redeemed, set apart from those damned to Hell. On this level, Julian seems to be using the familiar religious vocabulary of her time.

Yet her use of this phrase proves far from straightforward. She never speculates on who might be excluded from salvation, nor does she dwell on the fate of the damned. Instead, her attention is consistently directed towards the boundless mercy and love of God as revealed in her Showings, and to the assurance that sin 'shall be no shame' to those who are saved (LT38.1–2). For Julian, the phrase *'those who shall be saved'* is not about drawing boundaries, but about affirming the certainty of God's promise that *'all shall be well'*.

This raises a larger theological question as to whether Julian's optimism stretches the expression *'those who shall be saved'* beyond its conventional scope. When she records Christ's promise that *'all shall be well'*, is she implicitly extending salvation through her words *'those who shall be saved'* to all humanity? Julian never states this directly, and she remains careful not to contradict the Church's teaching on sin and judgement (LT45.2). Yet the momentum of her thought – her refusal to let sin or evil have the last word – gestures towards a wider meaning for *'those who shall be saved'* than her contemporaries usually allowed.

Thus, in Julian's hands, *'those who shall be saved'* is not intended to exclude anyone. It becomes instead a doorway into her boldest conviction: that God's love is utterly trustworthy and poured out for all. These considerations alone provide a compelling case for Julian's meaning to convey a universalist perspective in which all are saved and none are damned. At this point, of course, other considerations also come into play.

14 ~ *Julian's Universalism (1)*

Unlike a modern author, Julian could not write and circulate her work without constraint. She lived under the very real threat of ecclesiastical sanction, the destruction of her writings, and even prosecution.[94] Note also that in her day, possession of heretical books was itself regarded as proof of heresy, for to read such works was taken as tacit consent to the doctrines they contained. So she must also consider the welfare of her readers.

For these reasons, Julian could never have declared openly that, in consequence of her Showings, she believed that God's grace was poured out upon all people, in all places, at all times. If she held such a universalist theology, she had to voice it indirectly. What she could do, however, was record her reflections with candour and faith, shaping them so that they could hint, suggest, and guide her attentive readers towards the truth. Her strategy, we might say, was to leave signposts or waymarkers – affirmations or premises embedded in her reflections – that invite her readers to construct for themselves the argument she was not free to state, and arrive at the conclusion that salvation is not merely offered to all, but given to all as the inescapable fulfilment of God's intention for his creation.

If we look for such waymarkers in Julian's work, two stand out with unmistakable clarity: her refrain that *'all shall be well'*, and her profound conviction that *'God is our mother'*. Each, when reflected on seriously, offers itself as a premise that presses

[94] Already referenced in Part 5, *No Wrath in God*, above. See also Appendix 2.

beyond conventional boundaries and opens the way to universal salvation.

The first, (a) *'all shall be well'*, occurs not as a mere passing comfort but as the very wellspring of Julian's striking revelations (LT27.2–3). Its insistence on the little word *all* refuses limitation. If even a single soul were lost eternally to the torments of the inferno, then not all would be well; some measure of creation would remain unhealed, God's purposes frustrated, and the fullness of divine love thwarted. To interpret Julian here as speaking of 'all' in merely a partial or qualified sense is to empty her words of the weight she clearly means to place upon them. Her readers are compelled to confront the universal scope of the vision that God gave her: whatever the mystery, however the means, God's redeeming love will finally embrace the whole of creation without remainder.

Another striking signpost is that of her daring declaration (b) *'God is our mother'* (LT59–63). For Julian, this is no mere metaphor but a disclosure of God's very being: bearing, nurturing, feeding and sustaining all creatures with an inexhaustible tenderness. A mother does not will the destruction of her children or confine them to eternal torment; her love is unbounded, and she does not rest until each one is gathered in safely. If God is truly our mother, then the salvation of all is not only possible but inevitable, for divine maternity cannot abandon its offspring without ceasing to be itself. Here again the premise carries a universal force: to be created is to be borne of God, and to be borne of God is to be destined for God's care, for his healing love, and our eventual homecoming.

Taken together, these premises suggest the direction of Julian's thought. If God is mother to all, and if God has revealed

that all shall be well, then the only coherent conclusion is that the divine purpose excludes no one. Julian could not state this openly; but in repeating, circling, and layering these images throughout her *Showings*, she leaves her readers to follow the logic of her words to their necessary end. She is, in effect, leaving breadcrumbs along the path that she wants us to follow.

It is therefore not enough simply to note these phrases as edifying or devotional; they must be read as deliberate theological signals. Julian repeats them with insistence, elaborates them with care, and places them at crucial moments in her narrative. To trace their meaning is to uncover the architecture of her thought, one in which God's universal love presses against the inherited boundaries of orthodoxy, crying out to us in welcome and hoping that we will notice.

Another cluster of signposts comes from considering Julian's teaching about the nature and constancy of divine love, and is remarked upon throughout the *Showings*.[95] (c) God loves the little thing into its existence,[96] and therefore (d) loves *everything* in the creation into its existence (since the little thing *is in fact the entirety of everything*). (e) God encloses us out of tender love, protecting us in one, abundant love.[97] And at LT8.2 and

[95] Indeed, the *Showings* has as its subject matter God's love – what it is, how it manifests, how we may know it with confidence and receive comfort from it.

[96] At LT5.3.

[97] LT71.8, 82.4, 79.3. We may note also that the concluding paragraph of the *Showings* declares that '*love is our Lord's meaning*' (LT86.3), translating *mening*, purpose, intention; present in modern English in such expressions as 'What do you mean by doing that?' 'She's very well meaning,' 'I mean to be there by four.'

46.3 she declares that (f) *'God is all love'*. Hence, if God's very being is love, and if this love is all-encompassing, then nothing can stand outside its embrace. To suggest that some might be forever excluded would be to imply a limit in God's essence, forcing us to accept that divine love is partial or conditional.[98] Julian's conclusion here is simple but decisive: because God is love, and nothing other than love, God's action in creation and the saving grace that pours from him *must be universally poured out for all.*

Closely related to this point is Julian's conviction that (g) *God's love is unchanging*[99] – that is, it must always be the same and must always be constant. Unlike human affections, which can fail or falter, divine love does not diminish, withdraw, or alter in response to the character of our actions or the nature of our inner thoughts. If God's love is constant, then it must extend unceasingly to every soul, without interruption or exception. The unchanging nature of divine love undermines any theology of eternal rejection: were God's love to cease for even one soul, it would not be unchanging but variable, conditioned by human imperfections and weaknesses. Julian's revelation that God's love is unchanging presses in the opposite direction and denies the possibility of eternal punishment: God's constancy ensures that no creature can ultimately fall outside the reach of his mercy.

[98] Conditional, that is, on our accepting the transactional contract with God, that only if we do these particular things, then eternal bliss will be granted to us.

[99] At LT43.4, for instance.

Here is yet another signpost – Julian affirms that (h) *God dwells permanently at the centre of each person's soul*.[100] If this is true, then every human being carries within themselves the indwelling presence of God. Such an interior habitation is not provisional but essential, part of the very structure of each creature's existence – their very being in the world. It would be incoherent to hold that God dwells at the centre of the soul and at the same time believe that such a soul might finally be abandoned to Hell's inferno or taken out of existence. This premise about God's dwelling-place also points to universal restoration: whatever God indwells – which we must understand as the totality of what exists – God can never forsake.

To appreciate the power of what Julian's Showings establish, here is an exercise in reflecting a little further on just the final three of the affirmations we have just noted – that (f) God is all love,[101] that (g) God's love is unchanging,[102] and that (h) God dwells permanently at the centre of every soul.[103] These converge into a single theological vision; they are not simply scattered, devotional insights but an interlocking framework that resists limitation. If God's very being is love, if that love never fails, and if it abides permanently at the heart of every creature, then no soul can finally fall outside its embrace.

Julian herself could not state such a conclusion directly; yet by layering these affirmations (along with all the others) throughout her *Showings*, she leaves her readers able to see what she could not say directly: that the destiny of all creation is noth-

[100] See LT55.3, 68.1–4.
[101] LT8.2; 46.3.
[102] LT43.4.
[103] See LT55.3, 68.1–4.

ing less than the universal restoration of all things in God's unchanging and wholly abundant love.

15 ~ *Julian's Universalism (2)*

We can explore more deeply the richness of Julian's theology by attending to further affirmations, scattered like breadcrumbs along the path leading us towards her conclusion: that God loves all things within which he abides – that is, the entirety of creation – and that this love is universally present in, and present to, everyone at all times. One of the tasks Julian clearly hoped her *Showings* would fulfil was to lead her readers to this crucial perception.

One of Julian's most striking images is that of Christ's blood, streaming from the wounds inflicted on his scalp as the Roman soldiers pressed a crudely made crown of thorns upon his head. Indeed, her vision of Christ's face and bleeding wounds is the very first of the Showings (LT4; ST3.2; 8.1/3). She does not see a mere trickle of blood, as would have been visible at the Crucifixion, but great drops falling from under the crown, resembling 'pellets', pouring down like rainwater from the eaves of a house, in such abundance that to count them would be impossible.

Later, in the fourth Showing (LT12.1), Julian sees Jesus being whipped, the lashes leaving deep gashes from which blood flows so profusely that she can no longer see the wounds, nor even the body itself. At LT12.3, she sees the blood descend into the depths of Hell, breaking open its doors and freeing all 'who belonged to the court of Heaven'. Then the blood overflows the whole earth, washing away the sins of all who are 'possessed

of a good will, all who have been and all who yet shall be'.[104] Finally, it ascends into Heaven, 'rejoicing in the salvation of all mankind who are there now, and who yet shall be' (LT).

The salvific power of Christ's blood thus courses everywhere: across the whole earth, down to Hell, and up to Heaven. All who live now, all who have ever lived, all who shall live in the future, all who have been consigned to Hell, and (apparently) all who are already in Heaven – *everyone* – is included in salvation. No one is overlooked.

Julian's phrasing here could be read as restrictive. When she says that Christ's blood redeems those who 'belong to the court of Heaven' and those who are 'possessed of a good will', might this not imply that only certain souls are saved, while others are excluded? In fact, the opposite is the case. Both expressions, when read in the light of her wider theology, become confirmations of the universality of salvation.

The phrase 'those belonging to the court of Heaven' must be taken inclusively. For Julian, the destiny of humanity is already held secure in God's eternal purpose:

---

[104] In addition to using the term 'good will', Julian also uses the expression 'godly will'. They are presumably meant to be synonymous; or, on the other hand, it is possible that one became confused with the other by scribes when copying their exemplars, leaving us unsure about what Julian originally wrote. 'Good will' appears at LT12.3, 30.1, 51.3/5; ST14.3, 19.6. 'God's good will' appears at LT43.1, 53.2, 70.3. 'Goodly will' occurs at ST17.2. 'Godly will' appears at LT37.3, 53.1, 58.1, 59.4; note that 'godly will' does not occur in the ST. The concept of a godly will is already present in Christian Neoplatonism, where creation is understood as the free act of God and the human will is called to align with it. Something very similar was present in Stoic philosophy, well before the advent of the Christian era.

> I saw that to us he is everything that is good and comforting that helps us. He is our clothing that wraps us in love, winding about us, embracing us ...
>
> (LT5.1)

To 'belong to the court of Heaven' is not to be among an elect few, but to be among all those whom God loves – and this, for Julian, means the whole of creation.

Likewise, when she speaks of salvation for 'all who are possessed of a good will', she is not making a condition that only some can meet. Elsewhere, she insists that every person, by nature, carries within themselves this 'good will' as the very presence of God in the soul. In LT6.6 she writes: ' ... for our natural wish is to have God, and God's good wish is to have us'. And as we have already seen, Julian speaks of God's will dwelling at the innermost centre of the soul,[105] a presence which cannot be destroyed or undone. To have 'good will' is therefore not an achievement of human striving, but a gift inseparable from our very being, and from God's dwelling within us.

Thus, when Julian describes in vivid imagery Christ's blood – flowing in torrents from his wounded body, descending into Hell, overflowing the earth, and ascending to Heaven – redeeming all 'possessed of a good will', she is not narrowing the scope of salvation but revealing its breadth; for since every soul bears within it the indwelling will of God, none can be excluded. What may at first appear to be limiting expressions – 'the court of Heaven', 'those possessed of a good will' – when set within the context of her wider theology, become not re-

[105] See above, Part 12, *The Soul as City*. And see especially LT51.12, 52.4.

strictions but guarantees that no soul is beyond the embrace of salvation. To belong to the 'court of Heaven' is to be enfolded in God's eternal purpose, and to have 'a good will' is simply to possess what all creatures already carry: the indwelling presence of God at the centre of their being. The blood of Christ, then, is not the sign of redemption for a chosen few but the overflowing outpouring of divine love that touches every creature, past, present and future. In Julian's vision, no one is left outside the reach of this love.

EXCURSUS G ~ *Satan in Medieval England*

In Julian's England, belief in the Devil as a personal and malignant power was part of the very fabric of the Christian imagination. Medieval theology, following Augustine[106] and Gregory the Great, taught that Satan was once a mighty angel who, through pride, fell from Heaven and became the adversary of humankind. Gregory's *Moralia in Job*, one of the most influential exegetical works in the Middle Ages, depicted the Devil as the tempter of the righteous and the accuser of sinners, yet also as an enemy whose power was limited by God's providence. This understanding was repeated in pastoral manuals such as the *Pastoral Care* of Pope Gregory I, widely circulated in England, and found homiletic expression in vernacular collections such as the *Cursor mundi*[107] and the popular sermon literature.

[106] See Augustine, *The City of God*, XI.13/15; XIV.11.

[107] The *Cursor mundi* (*Course of the World*) is a long Middle English verse chronicle (c. 1290–1325), recounting salvation history from Creation to the Last Judgement. Drawing on Scripture, patristic writers such as Augustine and Gregory, and the *Legenda aurea* (*Golden Legend*) – a

The devotional world of fourteenth-century England was steeped in such imagery. Anchoritic guides like the *Ancrene Wisse* (thirteenth century) warned recluses against the Devil's subtle insinuations, and mystical treatises such as Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* urged the soul to meet such assaults with humility and steadfast faith. Popular hagiography, above all Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda aurea* (*Golden Legend*), abounded in tales of saints harried by demons – sometimes grotesque, sometimes almost theatrical, but always, in the end, overthrown by grace.[108]

These convictions were not confined to the schools. Parish preaching, the cycle of mystery plays, the painted walls of parish churches, and the great rood-screens that separated nave from chancel made the Devil's reality and menace vivid to layfolk.[109] The devastations of plague, the harshness of successive famines, and the fears stirred by rebellion in Julian's own lifetime lent an even sharper edge to the sense that Satan and his Fiends were at work in the world – sowing discord, tempting to despair, seeking to mar the beauty of God's creation. Yet, for all this dread, the faithful trusted that the adversary's power was held within bounds, and that his apparent victories were but the

---

hugely popular medieval collection of saints' lives and feast-day stories, compiled in Latin by Jacobus de Voragine, a Dominican friar and later archbishop of Genoa, around 1260 – all popularised orthodox teachings, including the fall of Lucifer, in the vernacular for lay audiences.

[108] See note to LT38.2: it appears that Julian was familiar with John of Beverley, who was tempted by the Devil into drunkenness.

[109] See for instance Madeleine Gray, 'The Writing Behind the Wall: Text and Image in Late Medieval Church Decoration,' The Antiquaries Journal 102 (2022): 1–25, bit.ly/48DILhO.

prelude to his ultimate defeat – a defeat that, in the hope of the faithful, would one day reveal the sovereignty of divine love.

It was within this world of vivid belief – shaped by Scripture, the teaching of the Fathers, pastoral counsel, and the stories of saints – that Julian came to discern her own encounters with the Fiend. Her visions do not stand apart from the devotional imagination of her age, yet they are marked by her distinctive insight into the ultimate powerlessness of evil.

16 ~ *Demonic Assaults*

If Julian's *Showings* open before us the immeasurable expanse of divine love, they also, at points, confront the stark reality of its opposite: the evil intent of the Fiend and his cohort of Fiends. Julian uses those terms, of course, to denote the Devil (or Satan), and those spiritual beings who have fallen under his sway, waiting on him to do his bidding, together spreading malice and suffering, striving to separate souls from God's love with the intention of heaping new sins upon the mountains of sin already here. Her visions of the Fiend, however, though at times deeply unsettling, serve not to magnify evil but to show its ultimate futility when set against the breadth of God's love.[110]

We can note that fairly early on in her Showings, Julian is told that Christ's Passion is, in fact, the Fiend's undoing:

> Through this is the Fiend overcome.
>
> (LT13.1; ST8.4)

[110] The Fiend or Fiends are mentioned at LT3.3, 4.3, 13.1–2/4–5, 19.1, 32.4, 67.1/2, 68.6, 69.1, 70.1–2, 77.1. Julian refers to the Devil at LT33.1.

'This', here, refers to the Passion itself, to Christ's suffering, death, and descent, by which he breaks the Fiend's power and empties his malice of effect and Hell of its denizens. From the outset, Julian is shown that evil has no lasting dominion, for the power of Christ's suffering has already defeated it.

This conviction is tested in two terrifying experiences of demonic assault. In the first, Julian beholds the Fiend in grotesque bodily likeness:

> It seemed to me that the Fiend took me by the throat, pushing right into my face a visage like that of a young man, long and amazingly thin ... red, like a tile that has been newly fired ... his hair was red, like rust ... he grinned at me with a malicious look that revealed white teeth ... and with his paws he held me by the throat, intending to stop my breath and kill me. But he could not.
>
> (LT67.1)

The vision is filled with sensory horror – the Fiend's strange, terrifying face, his attempt to choke her, followed (once she has awakened from sleep) by a foul stench, smoke and heat, as if the room were on fire – yet Julian can resist this assault by trusting that the mercy of God would protect her, as would her recollection of the Showings, together with 'all the faith of Holy Church': it is to these that she flees to find comfort (LT67.2).

At LT 69.1, we learn that the Fiend returns with renewed fury, with more vile stench and chattering voices that drive Julian to despair. This assault – lasting all night until after sunrise – she also resists through the power of Christ's Passion

(LT70.2). God himself tells her 'to keep herself in the faith' in order 'not to be taken by your enemies' (LT70.1).

Here is the practical upshot of what she was shown a few chapters earlier, when God assures her that she should trust that her visions were genuine, telling her:

> You shall not be overcome.
>
> (LT68.6; ST22.4–5)

That simple promise becomes the very substance of Julian's theology: it assures her that however violent the Fiend's rage, no matter how vile his stench, no matter how deep a despair he can induce, she cannot, in the end, be severed from God's love.

Nor does this promise apply only to the terrors of the Fiend. It extends to every circumstance of human frailty and suffering – to pain, fear, temptation, confusion, and the many vicissitudes that attend our living here, in God's creation. Whatever adversity may befall us, none of it has power to overcome the soul that trusts in God's steadfast love.

From such visions, Julian draws her enduring insight: the Fiend is real, malign, and active – but circumscribed. He may torment, but he cannot triumph; he may harass, but he cannot finally harm. Indeed, she concludes that his defeat is a cause for holy laughter (LT13.4), for whenever a soul rises again in humility after a fall,[111] the Fiend suffers greater loss than he ever gained. God himself mocks his futility (LT77.1).

---

[111] For Julian, and Christians across the ages, the term *fall* is used to denote any kind of sin or wrongdoing, any foolish mistake or selfish act, any careless omission, any thoughtless deed ... which all find their com-

Placed alongside her teaching on universal salvation, Julian's reflections on the Fiend serve as a cautionary counterweight. Evil exists and afflicts everyone, but its power is bounded. Divine love enfolds every creature, assuring that 'all shall be well'; and in Julian's second encounter with the Fiend (at LT69–70), he is shown as impotent, already overcome.[112] His fury is but a fleeting shadow, soon swallowed by the brilliant light of universal love, permitted to trouble us, but not, in the end, to prevail over us. Thus, the story of salvation is complete: love descending even into Hell, evil mocked in its futility, and Christ's promise resounding – that though we may be tested and tempted, pained and grieved, we shall not be overcome and all shall be well.

There remains an obvious, outstanding question: if Julian really meant to teach her readers a deep confidence in salvation for all – that not a single soul shall be left behind – which is what we have argued,[113] what will become of Satan and his minions? On this point, Julian is silent. Nowhere does she suggest that the Fiend himself will be restored; he remains, throughout her visions, the figure of opposition, the embodiment of hatred, futility, and mockery. And yet the logic of her universal hope

---

mon origin in the wilful disobedience of the first humans against God's directive (*original sin*). See above, Part 4, *Sin*.

[112] Where Satan appears, he is always shown to lack power and, ultimately, all his schemes come to nothing. At LT67.1, the Fiend tries to throttle Julian, but he fails. He is so pathetic and pitiable that God laughs at him with scorn and encourages Julian to do the same. (The Middle English word *scorne* conveys more than simple contempt; it suggests complete rejection and utter disregard.)

[113] See above, Excursus F and Parts 13–15 which address universalism.

presses towards this very possibility. If all of creation is held in God's love, and if the final 'great deed'[114] is nothing less than the making well of all things, then to leave any creature[115] outside would seem to diminish the scope of that love.

Julian herself does not resolve this tension, but she does not close it down either. She leaves the question hanging in the same open space where she entrusts every unresolved difficulty to divine mystery. Earlier theologians, such as Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, wrestled with the same problem: whether the Devil himself might at last be restored in the *apokatastasis*, the restoration of all things. Julian neither confirms nor denies such a hope, but the sweep of her vision leans in that direction. The Fiend, after all, is already mocked as defeated, his power broken and his malice turned to nothing. If the story ends with God's love triumphant and all creation gathered into harmony, then even here, at the furthest edge of opposition, we are invited to wonder whether – in some way beyond our grasp – the Enemy, too, may be made subject to the final triumph of love.

---

[114] LT32.17–18; ST27.3.

[115] In Julian's usage, 'creature' (Middle English *creature*, from Latin *creatura*) refers broadly to all that is created by God (what is *made*), as distinct from the Creator (what is *unmade*). The term can embrace the whole created order – humans, animals, and the natural world – yet in passages that speak of salvation, sin, or the soul, Julian often uses it with particular reference to human beings. Her language thus reflects both the cosmic scope of creation and the personal focus of redemption. Satan is not a physical creature, as we are ... so what is his status? He must be made somehow by God, otherwise he would not have an existence. With this question, we reach the limits of Julian's theology, and we will have to await the great deed to learn the truth of this.

17 ~ *Coda*

Confident in Julian's words, we may be as certain as she was that we need never be overcome. However pressing our doubts, and however tormenting the pains and terrors of living in this world, we may hold fast to the conviction that, when all is over and the great deed is done,

> Suddenly, we shall be taken from all our suffering, from all our sickness, from all our discomfort and from all our sorrow. We shall come up above, and we shall have God as our reward, and we shall be filled with joy and bliss. We shall never again have any manner of suffering, no manner of sickness, no manner of displeasure, no frustrating of desires, but forever joy and bliss, without end.
>
> (paraphrasing LT64.2)

And indeed, all shall be well.

✠

CHRONOLOGY

1327	Edward III comes to the throne.
November 1342	Probably the month and year of Julian's birth, inferred from her age ('thirty and a half') at the time of her revelations in 1373. She is born in Norwich (presumably), where she will live all her life. Some accept that she took the name 'Julian' from the name of the parish church, St Julian's, where she will be an anchoress for a substantial part of her adult life (for an alternative view, see Introduction: Excursus A). We do not know anything about her family background, though we may presume the family enjoys a certain level of wealth, enabling Julian to be provided for in her anchorhold.
1348–49	Julian is only six years old when the Black Death arrives in Norwich for the first time. Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340s–1400) is Julian's contemporary.
1361–2	Black Death in Norwich comes back for a second time (Julian is nineteen years old).
April 1370	Henry le Despenser, then the canon of Salisbury, appointed Bishop of Norwich.
1370s	Wycliffe and his circle begin work on an English translation of the Bible from the Latin Vulgate.
13 May[116] 1373	Julian is 'thirty and a half years old' when she experiences her sixteen Showings as she lies afflicted by what she and all those present presume will be a fatal illness.

[116] Might have been 8th May. See note to LT2.1, below.

1377	Richard II succeeds to the throne, aged 10.
After 1380?	Julian spends the rest of her life as a recluse at St Julian's Church in Norwich. This is probably where she writes her *Showings*. Julian is the first woman to write a book in English that has survived.
May 1381	The Peasants' Revolt led by Wat Tyler and John Ball begins in Essex when John Bampton (a royal official) attempts to collect unpaid Poll Tax. The uprising spreads quickly across south-east England.
June 1381	The Peasants' Revolt spreads to Norwich. Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich, acquires the epithet 'Fighting Bishop' for leading forces against the rebels, culminating in their defeat at the Battle of North Walsham.
May 1382	William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, convenes the 'Earthquake Synod' at Blackfriars, London, to address the emerging Lollard threat to the Church. The synod condemns as heretical John Wycliffe's twenty-four theses (already condemned as heresy by a synod at St. Paul's Cathedral in February 1377) and issues teachings on the doctrine of transubstantiation to counter Wycliffe's teachings (that transubstantiation of the Eucharist did not occur). The synod got its name from the fact that during its proceedings, the 1382 Dover Straits earthquake shook the city of London .
1382	Wycliffe's team of scholars completes its collaborative translation of the New Testament into English. Manuscript copies begin to circulate in England.
1384	The Wycliffe Bible (now including the Old Testament) is completed shortly before Wycliffe's death.
April 1388	Thomas Arundel is made Archbishop of York.

1393/4	Roger Reed leaves two shillings to 'Julian ankorite' in his will proved in 1393 or 1394 (though the date of its signing is not known) giving us a *terminus ante quem* for Julian's enclosure, a date before which Julian must have already been enclosed as an anchoress.
After 1393?	Julian begins writing her *Showings*, probably in her cell at St Julian's church in Norwich.
1395	John Purvey completes a significant revision of the Wycliffe Bible, aiming to make a more readable English version. The revised version is known as the 'Later Version' (LV) and is distinct from the 'Early Version' (EV) which appeared in 1382.
1399	Henry Bolingbroke deposes Richard II and is crowned Henry IV.
1401	*De heretico comburendo* ('Regarding the burning of heretics') or the Suppression of Heresy Act passed by Parliament under King Henry IV for the suppression of Lollards, punishing seditious heretics with burning at the stake. One of the strictest religious censorship statutes ever enacted in England, its aim is to stamp out Lollard preaching and possession of Lollard literature including Bibles translated into the vernacular.
February 1401	William Sawtrey, follower of Wycliffe, formerly Curate of St Margaret's in Lynn, now parish-priest at St Osyth's in London, is burned at the stake for Lollard heresy.
1404	Bequest of Thomas Emund leaves twelve pence to 'Julian, anchoress at the Church of St Julian in Norwich' and 'eight pence to Sarah living with her', presumably a servant.
January 1408	Archbishop Thomas Arundel issues his *Constitutions*, aimed at suppressing Lollardy. They restrict the production and circulation of vernacular reli-

gious texts and prohibit women from engaging in religious instruction.

1413 Julian's Short Text, in AMHERST 37790, probably transcribed this year.
Henry V comes to the throne.
Possibly this year, English Christian mystic Margery Kempe visits Julian at her anchorhold in Norwich, and will write about her meeting in her *Book*.

1415 John Plumpton's will, proved this year, does not mention Julian specifically by name. It leaves 'forty pence to the anchoress in the church of St Julian, Conesford, in Norwich, and twelve pence to her maid'; it also bequeaths to 'her former maid, Alice, twelve pence'.

1416 The last known documentary reference to Julian occurs in the will of Isabel Ufford, made this year (and proved in 1417), which leaves a bequest of 'twenty shillings to Julian, recluse at Norwich'.

c. 1416 Julian likely dies sometime after this date, presumably whilst still residing at her anchorhold at St Julian's in Norwich.

1422 Henry VI succeeds to the throne at the age of nine months.

1436 The *Book of Margery Kempe* is circulated.

c. 1440 Johannes Gutenberg (*c.* 1393–1468) develops the printing press in Mainz, Germany, revolutionising the circulation of books.

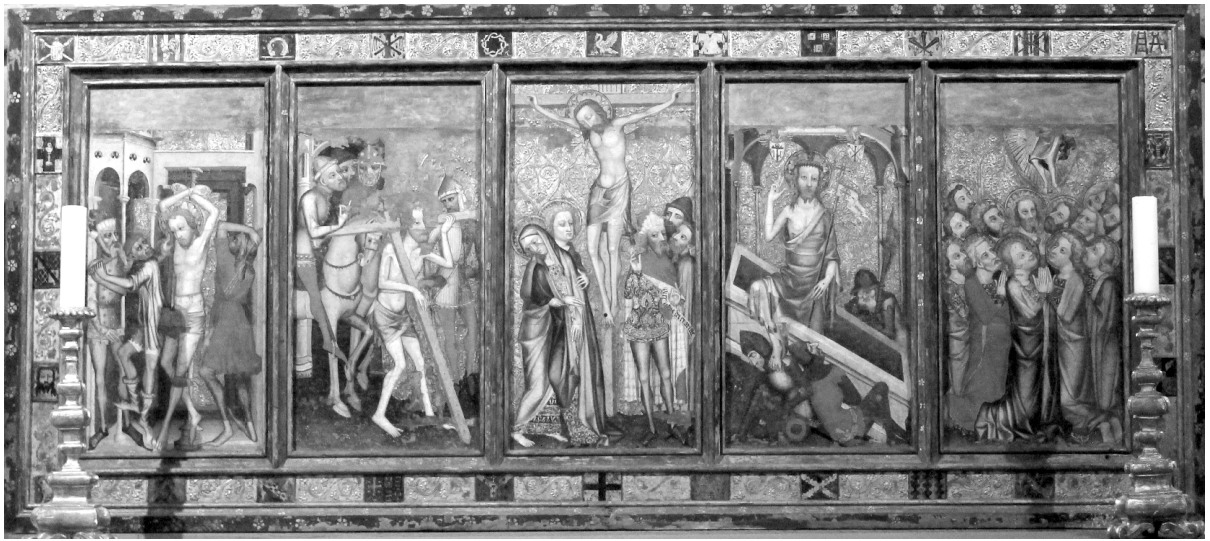
1455 Gutenberg prints first Latin Vulgate Bible.

1670 Serenus de Cressy, confessor for exiled English Benedictine nuns at Cambrai, northern France, publishes (most likely in London) the first printed edition of the Paris Manuscript, entitled the *XVI Revelations of Divine Love*. This edition was republished in 1843 by

George Parker, in 1877 by Henry Collins, and again in 1902 by George Tyrrell.

1901 Publication of Grace Warrack's translation of Sloane 2499 (the 'Long Text'), introducing early–twentieth–century readers to Julian's writings.

March 1910 As part of the sale of the library of Lord Amherst of Hackney, the Amherst Manuscript (an anthology of devotional texts, including Julian's *Vision*) was rediscovered when purchased by the British Museum (catalogued as Additional MS 37790). This is usually referred to as the 'Short Text'. The first modern edition was published a year later by Dundas Harford.



The Despenser Retable is an altarpiece in Norwich Cathedral dating back to the late 14th century, probably commissioned by Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich (1369-1406). The five panels depict the death and resurrection of Christ. Photographed by J An, May 2015. (Sourced from Wikimedia Commons and used under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International Licence.)

SHOWINGS OF LOVE

The version of Julian's Long Text translated in this edition is that of the PARIS manuscript (MS *Fonds Anglais* 40), held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (viewable on the Internet at bit.ly/3jhLPca).

The British Library preserves two further versions of the Long Text, SLOANE 2499 and SLOANE 3705 – the latter likely a faithful copy of the former – which also may be viewed at bit.ly/4l6NonD & bit.ly/40GmOds respectively.

For this edition, we have carefully compared PARIS with SLOANE 2499. All but minor variants are recorded in the footnotes; wherever we adopt a SLOANE reading, this is indicated by the note 'following SLOANE'.

Julian's writings also survive in other manuscript versions. Most notable is the Short Text (included in AMHERST 37790), a translation of which we include in this present edition. This forms part of a devotional anthology containing four additional texts, now held in the British Library and viewable here: bit.ly/3D0bLD5 (the *Vision* begins at folio 97r). In addition, the WESTMINSTER manuscript – part of Westminster Cathedral Treasury MS 4 – contains a compilation of Middle English devotional texts drawn from three sources dating to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, to which extracts from Julian's *Showings* have been added.

CHAPTER 1

A summary of the Chapters[117]

This is a REVELATION OF LOVE[118] given by Jesus Christ, our unending bliss,[119] in sixteen SHOWINGS.[120]

[1] The first was of his precious crowning with thorns, which included and described the blessed Trinity, together with the Incarnation and the unity between God and the soul of man, accompanied by many wonderful showings and teachings of

---

[117] The descriptive rubrics that occur at the head of each chapter are not present in the PARIS manuscript, but are found in SLOANE. They were almost certainly not written by Julian herself, but at some stage were added by later copyists and editors. They are included in this edition because, although they do not appear in the PARIS manuscript, readers already acquainted with Julian through editions based on SLOANE may prefer them to be present, and they do serve a useful, if not essential, function.

[118] The text of this translation and the spelling of Middle English terms in the footnotes follows the edition by Reynolds and Holloway 2001.

[119] i.e., that by which we are blessed.

[120] Julian uses the terms *revelation* and *showing* interchangeably. *Revelation* was a new word at this time, when it began to replace the older *showing*, and designates a 'vision' assumed to have a divine source. Julian uses the terms sometimes to refer to the mystical showings themselves, sometimes to her book as a whole. The latter appears in these notes as Showings – in regular type; whereas *Showings* – in italics – indicates the book itself.

unending wisdom and love, upon which all the following showings are grounded and united.[121]

[2] The second showed the discolouring of his beautiful face that signifies his most dear Passion.

[3] The third showed that our Lord God, in his mighty wisdom and love, just as he truly made all things that are, so also does he bring about all things that are done.

[4] The fourth showed the scourging of his tender body and the copious shedding of his precious blood.

[5] The fifth showed that the Fiend[122] is defeated by the precious Passion of Christ.

[6] The sixth showed the adoring gratitude by which our Lord God rewards all his blessed servants in Heaven.

[7] The seventh showed how we often experience joy and sorrow – that our feeling of well-being is occasioned by the gracious touch of God's comforting us with the certainty of unending joy; whilst our feeling of sorrow is the heavy and weary trial of our earthly lives – set against the spiritual understanding that we are kept safe in God's loving goodness, in both joy and sorrow.

[121] Translating *junyned*, joined.

[122] i.e., Satan or the Devil.

[8] The eighth showed Christ's final suffering and his cruel dying.[123]

[9] The ninth showed the blessed Trinity taking delight in Christ's hard Passion, after his piteous dying, and in this joy and delight he desires that we be comforted and gladdened with him, until we attain our bliss in Heaven.

[10] The tenth showed our Lord Jesus lovingly showing his blessed heart cloven in two.

[11] The eleventh showed most spiritually his dear Mother.

[12] The twelfth showed that our Lord God is all supreme being.

[13] The thirteen showed that our Lord God wishes that we have a high regard for all that he has done in the great splendour of making all things, and for the excellence of man's making, which stands above all his works, and for the precious Atonement he has made for man's sin, turning all our blame to endless honour.[124] By this he means to say, 'Look, and see

[123] Following SLOANE; PARIS has *drying*.

[124] In Julian's Middle English, *honour* had a broad and deeply significant meaning, encompassing ideas of virtue, reputation, and social standing. Someone is honoured especially when they are accorded the respect due to them in virtue of who they are and how they have acted with honour. See especially LT28.2, where Julian emphasises the dignity and respect that God *owes to us* in consequence of the suffering we have endured throughout our lives.

that by the same power, wisdom, and goodness by which I have done all this, I shall make well all that is not well, and you shall see it.' And in this he wants us to hold to the faith and promise of Holy Church, not desiring to know his secrets now, excepting those that belong to us in this life.

[14] The fourteenth showed that our Lord God is the ground[125] of our prayer. Here were seen two fair properties: one being true prayer, the other being certain trust, which he desires be equally abundant, and so our prayers will please him, and in his goodness he will answer them.[126]

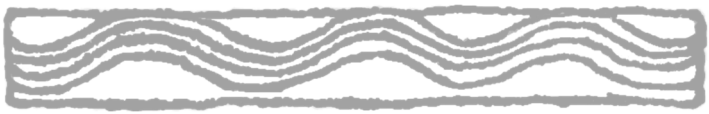
[15] The fifteenth showed that we shall immediately be relieved of all our suffering and all our sorrow, and through his goodness we shall come up above, where we shall have our Lord Jesus as our reward, and be filled with joy and bliss in Heaven.

[16] The sixteenth showed that the blessed Trinity, our Maker in Jesus Christ our saviour, dwells unendingly in our soul, gloriously ruling and commanding all things, and saving us and keeping

[125] Translating *beseking*, beseeching.

[126] This outline does not include a summary of LT44–63, including the account of the Lord and the Servant in LT51. Following the usual convention, references to chapters in the 'long text' of the *Showings* will be indicated by 'LT', and the sections of the shorter text of the *Vision* will be indicated by 'ST'.

us by his loving power and wisdom. And we shall not be overcome by our Enemy.[127]



[127] i.e., Satan or the Devil, again.

CHAPTER 2

Of the date of these Showings, and how she made three requests

This REVELATION[128] was shown to a simple, uneducated person,[129] living in deadly flesh,[130] in the year of our Lord 1373, the 13th of May,[131] which person had already requested three gifts by God's grace. The first was to experience the Passion.[132]

---

[128] SLOANE has *these revelations.*

[129] Translating *symple creature unlettyrde*. This may mean that Julian was illiterate, and that therefore the work we are now reading was made by dictating it to a scribe or secretary, though, more likely, Julian means that she cannot understand Latin, the language of scripture and almost all scholarly texts at this time. She uses the term *creature* intermittently throughout the *Showings*, designating herself as well as others, meaning by it 'the person who is created by God', because all that is created has its (metaphysical) ground in God. She does not mean it in a derogatory sense.

[130] Meaning that she is mortal.

[131] SLOANE stipulates 8th of May. The discrepancy derives from scribes confusing Roman numerals: either viij was misread for xiij, or vice versa. No solution as to which is the correct date has been forthcoming.

[132] i.e., Christ's suffering and death. Imagining oneself present at the events of Christ's Passion, to re-live them in one's own devotional meditation, was much approved and encouraged throughout this period.

The second was to suffer bodily sickness. The third was to receive God's gift of three wounds.[133]

[2] Regarding the first, I thought I could to some extent imagine the Passion of Christ. Yet through the grace of God, I desired to have more. My thought was really to have been there [at the Crucifixion] with Mary Magdalene[134] and the others who loved him, to see with my own eyes the Passion that our Lord suffered for me, so that I might suffer with him, as did the others who loved him. So I therefore desired to see with my own eyes, the better to understand our Saviour's bodily torments, and the Compassion of Our Lady, and of all those who truly loved him who were living at that time and who saw his

[133] 'Three wounds' correlates with the three wounds inflicted upon Christ by the nails that pinned him to the Cross – one nail for each hand and the third to fix both feet. Later depictions of the Crucifixion allow for a total of four nails so that each foot is accorded its own nail. The three-nail option derives from the visions of St Bridget of Sweden.

[134] Three of the Gospels (Matt 27:56, Mk 15:40, Jn 19:25) tell us that Mary Magdalene was present at the Crucifixion, and was to bring the news of Christ's resurrection to the disciples (Mk 16:1–10). In the devotional tradition of Julian's time, the focus on Mary Magdalene stressed her weeping at the Crucifixion. Medieval western Christian tradition identified Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus, with Mary Magdalene (Jn 11:1), and in Lk 10:38–42 this Mary is approved of by Jesus for sitting at his feet and listening to him instead of joining with Martha in preparing and serving food. In LT38.2, Julian includes Mary Magdalene with others as an example of those who led pious lives and whose sins brought no shame upon them.

suffering. I wanted to be one of them, and to have suffered with them. I had no desire for any other sight or showing from God, until my soul should depart my body, for I believed I would be saved by the mercy of God. Such was my intent, because I desired that through this Showing I may more truly understand the Passion of Christ.

[3] The second gift that I desired came to mind with sorrow,[135] freely, without any effort to seek it on my part, a willing desire to have from God the gift of a bodily sickness. I wanted that illness to bring me to the brink of death, so that in my sickness I could receive the Last Rites of Holy Church,[136] believing that I was about to die, and likewise, that all those with me who saw me might suppose the same. I wished for no manner of fleshly or earthly comfort, but I desired in my sickness to undergo all manner of bodily and spiritual suffering that would come to me were I to be dying, and I wanted even to experience those fears and torments inflicted by Fiends,[137] and

[135] Translating *contricion*.

[136] The Last Rites in the Catholic tradition do not constitute a single sacrament in itself, but is rather a set of sacraments given to people who are understood to be close to death. These are the sacraments of Penance (confession), then Anointing (application of oil), then Viaticum (Latin meaning 'provisions for a journey', from *via*, meaning 'way' – the rite of communion when performed for the dying person).

[137] It was widely accepted at this time that those dying would be attended by demons and other servants of Satan, whose purpose was to intimidate

all manner of other pains, save only the passing out of my soul.[138] And I intended this so that I might be purified by God's mercy and, through that sickness, afterwards live more completely to the honour[139] of God. And I hoped also that it would prepare me for when I really should die, for I desired soon to be with my God and Maker.

[4] These two desires, to experience the Passion of Christ and to suffer my own sickness, came with this condition (for I thought this was not the usual purpose of prayer), and I said, 'Lord, you know what I would want, were it your will that I might have it – and if it is not your will, good Lord, do not be displeased, for I want only what you want.' (In my youth I desired to have this sickness when I was thirty years old.)[140]

[5] For the third gift, by the grace of God and the teaching of Holy Church, I conceived a strong desire

---

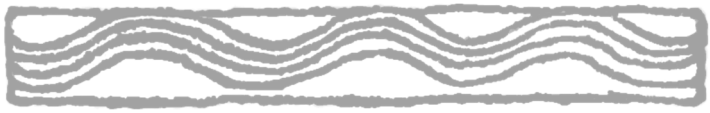
and persuade the dying person to renounce their faith. Julian has her own experiences of this deathbed visitation which she recounts in LT67 and LT69, when the 'Fiend' himself appears to her twice.

[138] That is, she wanted to have a complete experience of dying without actually dying.

[139] Translating *worshyppe*, honour, high respect, esteem, worthiness, merit.

[140] Some commentators remark that Julian's interest in the age of thirty attaches to the tradition that Jesus began his ministry at that very age.

to receive three wounds in my life,[141] which is to say, the wound of true contrition, the wound of kind compassion, and the wound of deep longing for God. As I asked for the first two gifts with a condition, so I asked for this third without any condition. The first two desires passed from my mind, but the third has remained, present continually.



[141] In ST1, Julian explains how the desire for these 'three wounds' attaches to her familiarity with the life of Saint Cecilia, one of the most famous of the Roman martyrs who, when put to death, after being struck three times on the neck with a sword, lived for a further three days, at which point she asked the pope to convert her home into a church. The rood screens of East Anglian churches were during this period commonly decorated with paintings of St Cecilia (Fr John-Julian 1988, 68).

CHAPTER 3

Of the sickness obtained from God by petition

And when I was thirty and a half years old, God sent me a bodily sickness in which I lay three days and three nights. And on the fourth night I received all the Rites of Holy Church,[142] believing that I would not live to see daybreak. And after that, I languished a further two days and two nights, and often on the third night I believed I would die,[143] as did those who were with me.[144] And yet in this I felt a great loathsomeness to

[142] She means the Last Rites.

[143] We can make the arithmetic of this sentence work only by following the suggestion from Watson and Jenkins in their note to this chapter, by counting days in the manner of a liturgical calendar, which takes any one day as beginning on *the evening of the previous day*. On this timetable, Julian falls ill on the evening of 7 May, the Last Rites are administered on the night of 10/11 May, and the curate she mentions in just a moment is called for on the night of 12/13 May, allowing for her Showings to commence on the morning of the 13th, some short while after sunrise. Fr John-Julian offers a suggested timeline for Julian's Showings in his discussion of dates and times (2009, 36).

[144] Some commentators have remarked that the fact that Julian reports that she had a group of people to attend to her throughout her illness suggests that she could not at this stage already have taken up her life enclosed as an anchoress. However, it seems troubling to think that the rules of enclosure would not have been suspended at least for the days of

die, and it grieved me to think of dying so young,[145] not because there was anything on earth that I wanted to live for, nor because I feared any suffering, for I trusted in God's mercy, but because I would have lived to have loved God better, and for a longer time, so that I might by the grace of that living have known a greater love of God in the bliss of Heaven. I wondered whether all the time I had lived here, being so little and so short[146] in relation to God's unending bliss, meant that my ceasing to live, good Lord, would be to your honour.

[2] And I understood, both in my reason and through my experience of pain, that I was about to die. And I assented completely to the will of my heart being one with God's will. Thus I endured till daybreak, though by then my body was dead to all feeling from the waist down. Then I was helped to sit upright, propped up so that my heart might be free to await God's will, thinking of him while I was still

---

an anchorite's final illness, or that the sick person would not, at least on some occasions, have been relocated to a family home, or taken to a hospital. The fact that she was attended neither supports nor undermines the claim that Julian was already living in her anchorhold at the age of thirty.

[145] Drawing on SLOANE.

[146] See Job 14:1–2, 'A mortal, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, comes up like a flower and withers, flees like a shadow and does not last' (NRSV).

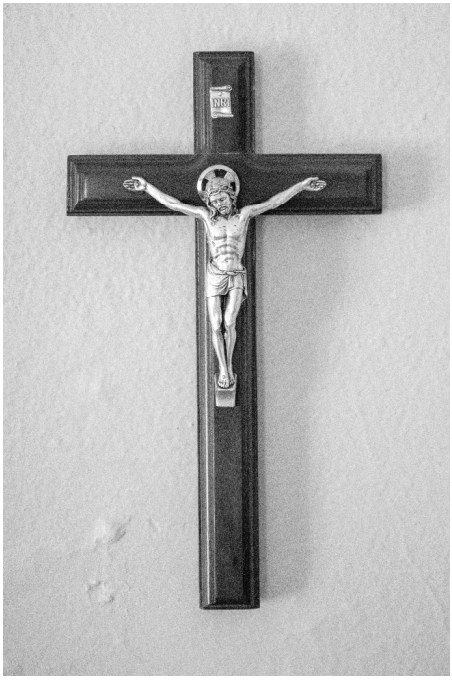


Photo by Kelsey Todd on Unsplash

alive. My curate[147] was sent for to be present at my end, but by the time he came my eyes had turned up and I could no longer speak. He set the cross before my face, and said, 'I have brought the image of your Saviour for you to look upon and be comforted.'[148]

[147] *Curate* in Julian's time refers to anyone in religious orders.

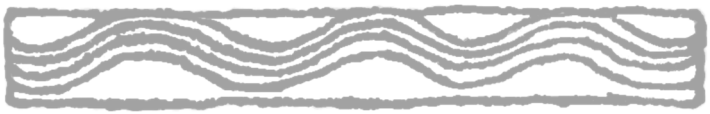
[148] By *cross*, Julian in fact means the crucifix that bears a little image of Christ, cast in metal or carved in wood, of the sort we have to this day. She will use the term *crucyfix* in the next paragraph, showing that in her time the terms were interchangeable.

[3] It seemed to me that I was all right as I was, with my eyes fixed, looking up towards Heaven, where I trusted I would soon go, by the mercy of God. Nevertheless, I assented to turn my gaze upon the face of the crucifix, if I could. And so I did, for I thought I might be able to better endure looking straight ahead than looking upwards. After this, my sight began to fail, and it grew as dark about me in the room as if it had been night, save only for the image of the cross, upon which fell an ordinary light – how, I did not know. Everywhere around the cross was ugly and fearful to me, as if it were occupied by Fiends. After this, the top part of my body began to die, to such a degree that I scarcely had any feeling at all, and my worst pain now resulted from shortness of breath. My life was now failing, and I really believed that I had died.

[4] And then suddenly, all my pain was taken from me, and I was as well – especially in the upper part of my body – as I ever was before. I marvelled at this sudden change, thinking that it was a mysterious work of God, and not natural. And yet, although I felt relief, I still did not expect to live, for the relief I felt was not complete, and I thought I would rather have been delivered of this world, for my heart had willingly accepted it.

[5] Then I suddenly realised that I should graciously entreat our Lord for the second wound of

his gift, that my body might be filled with an awareness and sense of his blessed Passion, for which I had prayed before. For I wanted his sufferings to be my sufferings, and to feel them with compassion, and afterwards have a longing for God. Thus, I thought that I might, through his grace, have the wounds that I had before desired. In all this, I had no desire for an actual vision[149] or showing of God, but for the compassion that I thought a kind soul might have for our Lord Jesus, who for love became a mortal man. I desired to suffer with him whilst living in my own mortal body, if God would give me grace.



[149] Translating *sight*.

CHAPTER 4

Here begins THE FIRST REVELATION *of the precious crowning of Christ as specified in the First Chapter, and how God fills the heart with great joy, and of his great meekness, and how the vision of Christ's Passion provides sufficient strength against all temptations of the Fiends, and of the great excellence and meekness of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

And in this [Showing], I suddenly saw the red, hot and fresh-flowing and copious blood running down from under the crown, just as it did at the time when the crown of thorns was pressed onto his blessed head,[150] when he who was both God and man[151] had in this way suffered for me. I had the strong belief that it was he himself who showed this to me, by some direct means.[152]

---

[150] See Matt 27:29, '...and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head' (NRSV).

[151] Alluding to the Incarnation, which is the major doctrine distinguishing Christianity from Judaism and Islam.

[152] Translating *it was him selfe that shewed it me, without any meane.* She intends to inform her reader that this teaching came to her from God directly, and not through the Church, scripture, theological reasoning, and so forth.

[2] And in the same Showing, suddenly the Trinity filled my heart with profound joy, and so I understood that it shall be like this in Heaven without end for all those that shall come there. For the Trinity is God, and God is the Trinity. The Trinity is our Maker. The Trinity is our Keeper. The Trinity loves us everlastingly. The Trinity is our endless joy and bliss,[153] by our Lord Jesus Christ and in our Lord Jesus Christ. And this was shown in this first vision[154] and in all of them, for where Jesus appears, there in my sight I was to understand the blessed Trinity.

[3] And I said, 'Blessed be the Lord,'[155] saying it reverently, with intent, in a loud voice, and I was overwhelmed by the wonder of it, and marvelled that he who is so revered and so awe-inspiring would be so homely[156] towards a sinful creature

[153] This is a reference to the three powers of the Trinity: 'making', 'keeping', and 'loving' are to be understood as attributes of God, Christ and Holy Spirit, respectively. The fourth attribute of 'joy and bliss' represents the unity of the Trinity understood as a single person.

[154] Translating *syght*.

[155] Translating the Latin *Benedicite dominus*. This alludes to the greeting exchanged between Benedictine monks, when the junior of the two requests a blessing of the senior. JUNIOR: Benedicite. (Bless me.) SENIOR: Dominus te benedicat. (May the Lord bless you.)

[156] Leaving Julian's expression untranslated. *Homely* means familiar, intimate, something with respect to which one feels 'at home', suggesting also comfort and security. God's wish that we find him homely is a dominant theme in the *Showings*.

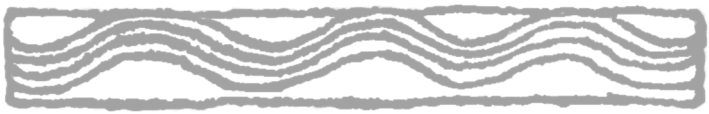
living in this wretched flesh. Thus I understood at that time that our Lord Jesus, through his courteous[157] love would comfort me before the time of my temptation, for I thought that by the will of God and under his keeping, I might well be tempted by Fiends before I died.[158] With this vision of the blessed Passion and the Godhead that I saw in my understanding, I knew with confidence that here was strength enough for me (and for all others who shall be saved) to stand against all the Fiends of Hell, and against all other spiritual enemies.

[4] And then he brought our Lady Saint Mary to my understanding. I saw her spiritually, in bodily likeness, a meek and simple maiden, young, hardly more than a child, appearing to me as she would have been when she conceived. God also showed me part of the wisdom and truth of her soul, so that I could see the reverence with which she beheld her God and Maker, marvelling with great reverence that he had chosen to be born of her, a simple creature of

[157] Julian often uses the terms *homely* and *curteyse* in conjunction, or in the same paragraph. See LT4.3, 7.4–6, 10.10, 14.1/4, 26.1, 74.4 75.5, 77.6, 79.3, 83.1; ST7.2, 13.5.

[158] Fiends, *fendes*, the Middle English term for demons or evil spirits. Christians at this time believed that the Devil and his Fiends could assail the faithful with temptations, doubts, or terrors, especially near death, seeking to draw the soul away from trust in God during someone's last moments.

his making. (For this was her marvelling, that he who was her Maker would be born of her who was made.) And this wisdom and truth, this knowing the greatness of her Maker and the littleness of her own standing, moved her to say very meekly to Gabriel, 'Behold me here, God's handmaiden.'[159] Through this vision I understood truly that she is more worthy and more fulfilled than anything else that God made beneath her, for in my vision, above her God made nothing save only the blessed manhood of Christ.



[159] Lk 1:38. Gabriel is the archangel whom God sent to Mary to tell her that she will conceive a son whose name will be Jesus (1:31). In Judaism, Gabriel appears in the Book of Daniel (8:16 and 9:21), and in Islam Gabriel is the Angel of Revelation through whom the Qur'an was revealed to the prophet Muhammad.

CHAPTER 5

How God is everything that is good to us, tenderly enwrapping us, and how all things that are made are as nothing in regard to Almighty God, and how man has no rest until he sets himself and all things at naught for the love of God

At the same time that I saw in my vision the bleeding head, our good Lord showed a spiritual vision of his homely loving. I saw that to us he is everything that is good and comforting that helps us. He is our clothing that wraps us in love, winding about us, embracing us, enfolding us, draping his love upon us so tenderly that he will never leave us. And so in this vision, as far as I understand it, I saw that he is everything that is good.

[2] And in this [vision] he showed a little thing, the size of a hazelnut,[160] lying in the palm of my hand, as round as any ball. I looked upon it with the eye of understanding, and thought, 'What can this be?' And the answer came, 'It is all that is made.' I

[160] See Wisdom 11:22, 'Because the whole world before you is like a speck that tips the scales, and like a drop of morning dew that falls on the ground' (NRSV). The hazelnut was used in recipes written at this period as a measurement for a small amount.

marvelled at how it could continue to exist, for it was so little that it seemed to me it might suddenly disappear. And in my understanding, I was answered, 'It exists and ever shall, because God loves it, and so all things have their being through the love of God.'[161]

[3] In this little thing I saw three properties: the first is that God made it, the second that God loves it, the third that God takes care of it. But what I should truly understand by Maker, Carer and Lover, I cannot tell, for until I am united[162] in substance with him, I may never have complete rest nor true happiness – that is to say – not until I am so bound to him that nothing in existence can come between my God and me.

[4] I thought this little thing that is made might suddenly disappear for being so small, and in this is the knowledge we need, to turn aside from everything that is made, to love and have God who is unmade. Here is the cause of our being so uneasy in heart and soul, for we seek our rest here,[163] in these things that are so little,[164] where there can be no rest,

---

[161] The existence of the world and of everything in it is sustained and maintained by the action of God's love for each and every little thing. God is thus present and active always and everywhere in his creation. This is a crucial aspect of Julian's theology.

[162] Translating *unyted*.

[163] i.e., in everything that is made.

[164] She means 'worthless'.

not knowing that true rest is found in God Almighty, all Wise and all Good,[165] for he is true rest.

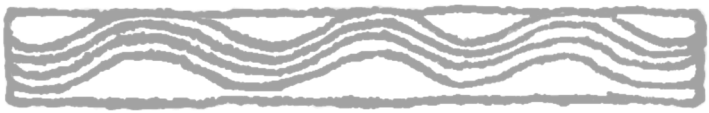
[5] God wishes to be known, and he likes us to rest in him. For nothing that is beneath him is sufficient for us. Here is the cause as to why no soul can be at rest until she thinks as nothing all things that are made, for only when she[166] willingly sets all at nothing for love, to have him who is all, is she able to receive spiritual rest.

[6] And also, our good Lord showed that he gains great pleasure when a wretched soul comes to him, bereft, open and without pretence. For this is the natural yearning of the soul touched by the Holy Spirit, as I understand this Showing, to say

[7] God, through your goodness, give me yourself,
For you are enough for me.
And I may ask for nothing that is less,
For I cannot honour you fully
By asking for anything less.
And if I ask for anything that is less,
Then forever will I be in want,
For only in you do I have everything.

[165] The attributions of power, wisdom and goodness are traditionally assigned to the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
[166] *Sowle*, which in Latin is the *anima*, is female.

[8] And these words, 'God, through your goodness,' are most delightful to the soul, and most closely touching the will of our Lord, for his goodness fills all his creatures and all his blessed works, completely, without end. For he is what has no end, and he has made us only for himself, and has restored us through his blessed Passion, caring always for us with his blessed love, doing all this through his goodness.



CHAPTER 6

How we should pray, and of the great tender love that our Lord has for our soul, wanting us to be immersed in knowing and loving him

This Showing was given to my understanding to teach our soul wisely to cleave to God's goodness, and at the same time the custom of our prayer was brought to my mind, and that for lack of understanding and knowing about love we adopt all sorts of intermediaries.[167] Then I saw that what really honours God the most, what truly delights him, is our faithfully praying to him in his goodness, and cleaving to that through his grace, with true understanding and steadfast belief, rather than relying on any of those intermediaries that our heart may devise. For if we made use of all such intermediaries, they would be insufficient and could not really honour God. But in his goodness is everything, and here nothing can fail us.

[2] And this, as I shall now say, came to my mind at the same time, that we pray to God by his holy Flesh, by his precious Blood, by his holy Passion and

[167] We follow most translators who adopt 'intermediaries' for Julian's Middle English *meanes*, means.

his most dear Death and his honourable Wounds, yet all the blessed kindness and eternal life that comes from all this, all come from God's goodness. And also when we pray to him by the love of his sweet Mother who bore him, the help that she gives us comes from God's goodness. Or if we pray by the holy Cross upon which he died, all the help and strength that comes from the Cross also comes from God's goodness. And in the same way, all the help that comes to us through the special saints and from all the blessed company of Heaven, the most worthy love, and the holy, unending friendship that comes from them, comes from his goodness. For the means by which his goodness may help us, God has ordained, are wonderful and many, of which the chief and principal intermediary is the blessed Humanity[168] that he took from the Maiden,[169] together with all the means that went before and come after, which belong to our redemption and our unending salvation.

[3] On account of which it pleases him that we seek him and worship him through these intermediaries, understanding and knowing that he is the goodness within everything. For the goodness of God is the highest object of prayer, and it comes

[168] Translating *kynde*, nature.

[169] i.e., Mary.

down to us to meet our most basic needs. It quickens our soul, making it live, making it grow in grace and virtue. It is nearest in nature and readiest in grace, for it is this same grace that the soul seeks, and ever shall, until we truly know our God who has enclosed us all in himself.

[4] A man goes upright, and the food of his body is kept as though in a very fair purse, and at the appropriate time it is opened and then shut again, all most fittingly. And that it is God who does this is shown where he says that he comes down to us, to the lowest part of our need.[170] For he does not despise what he has made, nor does he disdain to serve us in the simplest function that belongs to the nature of our bodies; for love of the soul he has made us in his own likeness, for as the body is clothed in cloth, the flesh in skin, the bone in flesh, and the heart by the chest, so are we – body and soul – clothed and enclosed in the goodness of God – yes, and even more intimately, for all those other things vanish and

[170] See Wisdom 11:24, 'For you love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that you have made, for you would not have made anything if you had hated it' (NRSV). The text of this paragraph up to this point, about evacuating the bowels, is missing in SLOANE.

waste away,[171] while the goodness of God is always whole and incomparably close to us.

[5] For truly, in his love for us, he desires that our souls cleave to him with all their might, and that we should evermore cleave to his goodness. For of all things that the heart may devise, this is what would please God the most and most readily benefit us, for our souls are so preciously loved by him who is highest that it surpasses the knowing of all creatures, which is to say that there is no creature who is made who may know how much and how sweetly and how tenderly our Maker loves us. And therefore, by his grace and help, may we stand beholding in spirit the unending wonder of his high, surpassing, immeasurable love that our Lord, in his goodness, has for us.

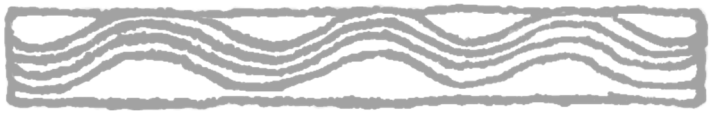
[6] And therefore may we reverently ask of him who loves us, for all we may wish,[172] for our natural wish is to have God, and God's good wish is to have

[171] Cf. Ps 102:25–6, 'Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you endure; they will all wear out like a garment' (NRSV).

[172] Fr John-Julian in his note (2009, 84 n.12) reminds us that this is not intended as a licence to ask for whatever hedonistic indulgences that might stir our desires, but instead confirms that our authentic prayer 'reflects our intuitive awareness of God's will'. Cf. Jn 15:16, 'You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name' (NRSV).

us. And we may never cease in such wishing and longing until we fully and joyously have him, for then we shall wish for nothing more, for he wants us to be immersed in knowing and loving him until the time comes when we shall be fulfilled in Heaven.

[7] And this is why this lesson of love was shown to me (along with all that follows, as you shall see), for the strength and ground of everything was shown in the First Vision. For of all things, the beholding and the loving of the Maker makes the soul in its own eyes seem the slightest thing, and to the greatest extent fills it with reverent awe and true meekness, and with an abundance of love for his fellow Christians.



CHAPTER 7

How our Lady, beholding the greatness of her Maker, thought herself least, and of the great drops of blood running from under the garland, and how the greatest joy to man is that God, most high and mighty, is most holy and most courteous

And at the same time, to teach us this, as I understand it, our good Lord showed our Lady Saint Mary, which is to say that he showed her profound wisdom and truth that came to her when she beheld her Maker. Through this wisdom and truth she beheld her God so great, so high, so mighty and so good. Her beholding the greatness and nobility of God filled her with reverent awe, through which she saw herself so small and so low, so simple and so poor when compared to her God, that this reverent awe filled her with meekness. And thus by this ground[173] she was filled with grace and all manner of virtues, surpassing all other creatures.

[2] And at the same time as he showed to my spiritual sight what I have just described, my physical vision continued with that copious bleeding

[173] i.e., on this foundation, for this reason.

from the head. Great drops of blood fell down like pellets[174] from under the garland,[175] seeming to come out from the veins. And they came out a reddish brown, for the blood was very thick. But as they spread out they turned bright red. And when they came to the brows, there they vanished. And all the time this bleeding was present to my vision, I came to see and understand many things. The beauty and vividness continued, just as beautifully and vividly.

[3] The copious flow resembled the drops of water that fall from the eaves of a house after a downpour of rain, that fall so thickly that no one may count them by earthly wit. In their roundness they were like the scales of a herring[176] as they spread across the forehead. These three things came to my mind at this time: *pellets* for the roundness of the way the blood came out, *scales of the herring* for their roundness as they spread out, and *drops from the eaves* of a house for their innumerable quantity.

---

[174] Translating *pelottes*, pellets, spherical or circular objects, gobs, lumps, or pieces.

[175] The crown of thorns.

[176] Caught in the North Sea off the East Anglian coast and brought to Norwich via the River Yare and into the city itself by its tributary, the River Wensum, herring was a major feature of Norwich's economy at this period. The sight, smell and taste of herring would have been a daily experience for Julian.

[4] This Showing was alive and vivid and hideous and awe-inspiring and sweet and lovely. And of all the visions that I saw– that our good Lord who is so revered and awe-inspiring is also so homely and so courteous – this was the most comforting to me and this is what so filled me most with delight and spiritual security.

[5] And to help me understand this, he showed this clear example.[177] The highest respect that an important king or great lord can show to a poor servant is to be homely with him, particularly if he shows it personally, sincerely, with a cheerful countenance, both privately and in public. Then this poor creature thinks, 'See! What more could this noble lord do to accord me pleasure and respect than to show to me, someone so insignificant, such marvellous homeliness? Truly, there is more joy and delight for me in this than if he were to give me great gifts whilst remaining aloof in manner.' I was shown clearly by this practical example how a man's heart might be so enraptured that he could almost forget himself for the joy of such wonderful homeliness.

[177] Three other 'examples' are presented in the course of the Showings. See the 'second degree of bliss' in LT14.3, the example of the man who loves someone to the exclusion of all others at LT25.4, and the central example of the whole work, the story of the Lord and the Servant in LT51.

[6] And this is how it goes between our Lord Jesus and us. For truly, as far as I can see, here is the greatest joy, that he who is most high, most mighty, most noble and most worthy, is also the most lowly and the most meek, the most homely and the most courteous. And truly, without doubt, this marvellous joy he will show to us all when we see him. And this our good Lord wishes, in whom we believe and trust, take joy and comfort, and find solace, as well as we may, with his grace and with his help, until that time when we shall see it plainly.[178] For as I see it, the greatest joy that we shall have is this marvellous courtesy and homeliness of our Father, who is our Maker in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our brother and our Saviour.

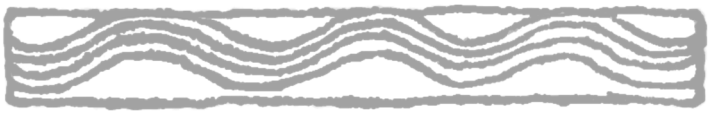
[7] But this marvellous homeliness may no man know in this life, unless it comes to him by a special showing from our Lord, or through a great inflow of grace given by the Holy Spirit. But faith and belief, with love,[179] deserve such a reward, and so, by grace, we have it. For in faith, with hope and love,[180] is our life grounded. This Showing which God will make known to whomsoever he may choose, already teaches it, openly declaring it with many secret

[178] i.e., after we are in Heaven, in the presence of God.

[179] Translating *charyte*, charity. See 1 Cor 13:13.

[180] *cheryte* (the scribe's spelling is not consistent).

points that belong to our faith and belief, which are worthy of being known. And when the Showing, which is given for but a moment of time, is hidden in the past, then faith keeps it by the grace of the Holy Spirit until our life's end. And thus through this showing[181] is revealed nothing other than what faith already shows us, for this is what our Lord teaches, as will be seen by the time we come to the end of this matter.



[181] i.e., the entirety of the Showings.

CHAPTER 8

A recapitulation of what has been said, and how it was shown to her, but intended for us all

For as long as I saw this vision of the abundant bleeding from the head, I could never cease saying these words: 'Blessed be the Lord.'[182] In this Showing I understood six things.

[2] The first, the copious shedding of his precious blood, is a token of the blessed Passion.

Second, the Maiden is his most dear Mother.

Third, the blessed Godhead always was, is, and shall be, all-powerful, all-wisdom and all-love.

Fourth, God has made all things, for well do I know that Heaven and earth and all that is made, is great, large, beautiful and good,[183] though it appeared so small[184] in my eyes because I saw it in the presence of him who is the Maker. For a soul that

[182] Translating the Latin *Benedicite dominus*. See Note to LT4.3.

[183] In using these four adjectives, Julian means to tell us that God's creation is extensive, having abundant contents that are pleasing to the eye and agreeable to all the senses, and are in all other respects excellent, beneficial and valuable.

[184] Julian is referring to her vision of the small thing in LT 5.2–4.

sees the Maker of all things, all that is made seems by comparison remarkably small.[185]

Fifth, he made all things, and made them out of love, and by this same love are they sustained, and shall be, without end, as was said before.[186]

Sixth, it seems to me that God is everything that is good, and that he is the goodness that all things have.[187]

[3] And all this our Lord showed in the first vision, giving me space and time to understand it. And as the physical vision ended, my spiritual vision stayed in my understanding. And I waited in reverent awe, delighting in what I saw, daring to desire to see more, if this were his will, or at least to have the same vision last for a longer time.

[4] In all this, I was much moved by love[188] for my fellow Christians, that they may all see and know what I had seen, for I wished that it could comfort them, for this vision was shown for everyone. Then I

---

[185] This sentence appear to to be a direct quotation from *St Gregory's Life of St Benedict*, which for some commentators suggests a connection between Julian and the Benedictine Priory at Carrow which owned St Julian's Church, the site of her anchorhold (Pelphrey 2012, 11).

[186] at LT5.2.

[187] Julian means to emphasise that good things do not just reflect, manifest or somehow partake of God's goodness, *but are in their very essence God himself*. He is one and the same as all things good. See the note by Fr John-Julian.(2009, 90, n.2)

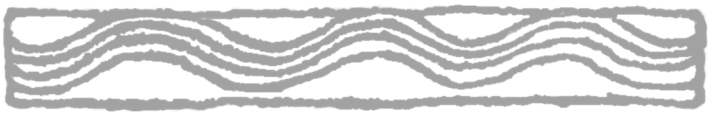
[188] Translating *cheryte*, charity. See 1 Cor 13:13.

said to those who were with me, 'It is this day Doomsday with me.'[189] And I said this because I thought I was going to die (for on the day that a man or woman dies, as I understand it, each receives their particular judgement as to how they shall be for all time), saying this because I wanted them to love God the better, to make them bear in mind that our lives are short, as they might see by example, for all this time I believed that I would die, and this surprised and somewhat amazed me, for I thought this vision was shown for those who would go on living.

[5] All that I say of myself I say on behalf of all my fellow Christians, for I was taught in the spiritual showing of our Lord God that this is what he means, and therefore I urge you all for God's sake, and counsel you for your own advantage, to leave off attending to the unhappy person to whom it was shown, and eagerly, wisely and meekly understand that God, who out of his courteous love and endless goodness would show it to everyone for the comfort of us all. For it is God's wish that you take it with

[189] 'Doom' is a cognate of 'deem', meaning judge, and 'Doomsday' refers to the Day of Judgement; if this is the day that Julian dies, then it will also be, for her, the Day of Judgement. This reflects the belief common in Julian's time, though by no means universally held, that each individual upon their death is judged by God rather than waiting until the Day of Judgement.

great joy and delight, just as if Jesus had shown it to each of you.



CHAPTER 9

Of the meekness of this woman, which keeps her always in the faith of Holy Church, and how he who loves his fellow Christians for God's sake, loves all things

It is not for the fact that I had this Showing that makes me a good person, but my loving God the better, and in as much as you love God the better, the Showing is more for you than it is for me. I do not say this to those who are wise, for they already know it well. But I say it to you who are simple, for your ease and comfort, for we are all one in love. To be sure, God did not show me that he loves me more than the most insignificant soul that receives his grace. For I am sure there are many who never had a showing or a vision, but only the common teaching of Holy Church, who love God better than I. For if I consider myself as a mere individual, I am clearly nothing. But in general,[190] I am, I hope, united[191] in love[192] with all my fellow Christians. For upon this uniting depends the life of all who shall be saved.

---

[190] i.e., in relation to everyone else.

[191] Translating *onehede of cheryte*, oneness in love. Julian uses the expression *oned*, as a verb, meaning 'made one', throughout the *Showings*.

[192] Translating *cheryte*, charity.

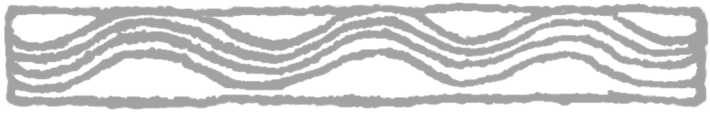
[2] For as I see it, God is all that is good, and God has made all that is made, and God loves all that he has made, and he who loves all his fellow Christians for God's sake loves all that is.[193] For when he saves mankind, I understand that he will save all, that is to say, all that is made, even the Maker of all. For God is in us, and in God is everything. And he who loves thus, loves all. And I hope by the grace of God that all who behold it thus shall be taught well, and greatly comforted, if comfort is needed. I speak of those who shall be saved – for at this time, God showed me no others.

[3] But in all things, I believe what Holy Church preaches and teaches, for the faith of Holy Church, which I had understood beforehand and which I hope by the grace of God I will keep fully in use and custom, stood continually in my sight, and I never wished or intended to receive anything contrary to this. And with this intent and understanding, I beheld the Showing as diligently as I may, for in this blessed Showing did I behold God's purpose.

[4] All this was shown in three ways, that is to say, by bodily sight, by words formed in my understanding, and by spiritual sight. But I cannot

[193] See 1 Jn 4:7–8, 'Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love' (NRSV).

and may not reveal the spiritual visions as clearly and completely as I would wish, but I trust in our Lord God Almighty that he shall of his goodness and for your love,[194] help you to receive them more spiritually and more sweetly than I can or may tell it.



[194] The phrase 'shall of his goodness and *for your love*' is reproduced verbatim. It is not clear whether Julian means to refer to God's love for her reader – 'because of the love God reserves as a gift for you' – or the love that her reader can have for God – 'hoping to evoke your love for God'. Julian, in the course of her writing, refers to the relationship that God has with us in terms of both God's love for us and our love for God.

CHAPTER 10

THE SECOND REVELATION *showed the discolouring of his face, of our redemption, and the discolouring of the Veronica Veil, and how it pleases God if we seek him eagerly, steadfastly resting in him and greatly trusting in him*

And after this, I saw with bodily sight the face of the crucifix that hung before me, of which I beheld continually a part of his Passion, seeing contempt, spitting, defiling and striking, and many lingering pains, more than I can tell, often changing colour. And one time, I saw how half the face, beginning at the ear, was covered over with dried blood, until it reached the middle of the face. And after that, the other half was covered in the same way. And then, as quickly as it came, it vanished.

[2] This I saw bodily, in sorrow and darkness. I wished there had been more light so that I could have seen more clearly. And I was answered in my reason, 'If God wishes to show you more, he shall be your light. You need none but him.' For I saw him and sought him. For we are now so blind and so unwise that we can never seek God until such time that of his goodness he shows himself to us. And

when, through his grace, we do see something of him, then we are stirred by that same grace to seek him with a fervent longing to see him with even greater joy. And so I saw him and sought for him. And I had him, yet still wanted him. And as I see it, this should be our common trust in this life.

[3] On one occasion, my understanding was taken down to the seabed, and there I saw green hills and valleys where it seemed moss was growing amongst the seaweed and gravel. Then I understood that if a man or woman were to be there, under the deep water, they might yet have sight of God. So as God is with a man continually, he shall be safe in soul and body, and come to no harm. And more than this, he should have more solace and comfort than the whole world may, or can, tell. For God wishes that we believe that we can see him continually, even though we think that be but little, and through this belief he makes us continually grow in grace, for he wishes to be seen, and he wishes to be sought, and he wishes to stay with us, and he wishes to be trusted.

[4] This Second Showing was so modest, so little and so simple, that my spirits were greatly troubled when I saw it, anxious, afraid and distressed, and I feared for some time whether it really was a showing or not. But on several occasions our Lord gave me further visions, through which I truly understood that this was a showing.

[5] It represented and resembled our foul, black deeds which our fair, radiant, blessed Lord bore for our sins. It made me think of the holy Veronica Veil[195] in Rome, on which is imprinted his own blessed face at the time of his cruel Passion, wilfully going to his death, and of his often changing colour, of the brownness and the blackness of his face, sorrowful and wasted.[196] Many have marvelled at how this image could come to be, how he could have imprinted it with his blessed face, which is the fairest of Heaven, flower of earth, and the fruit of the Maiden's womb. Then how could this image be so discoloured and so far from fair? By the grace of God, I would like to explain what I understood by this.

---

[195] This is the 'Vernicle', the cloth upon which, some believe, Christ imprinted a miraculous image of his face when Saint Veronica handed her veil to him so that he could wipe the sweat from his face as he carried the cross to Calvary for his Crucifixion (there is no mention of this incident in the canonical Gospels). This relic was greatly admired in the late Middle Ages, and many pilgrims trod the road to Rome in order to gaze in wonder upon it. The relic was hugely influential on painters and sculptors in their depiction of Christ's face from this period onwards, though it seems apparent that many depictions are derived from the image of Christ's face on the Turin Shroud. Some hold that the veil was destroyed after the Sack of Rome in 1527, and others maintain that the veil has been kept hidden in the Vatican to this day.

[196] This sentence alludes to the story that the Vernicle would sometimes change colour as a sort of narrative of what Christ was to experience during his time on the Cross.

El Greco (1541–1614), St Veronica Holding the Veil, c. 1580, oil on canvas (33.1 x 35.8 in). Museo de Santa Cruz, Toledo. (A public domain image from Wikimedia Commons.)

[6] We know in our faith and in our belief through the teaching and preaching of Holy Church that the most blessed Trinity made mankind in his image and likeness. In the same way, we know that when man fell so deep and so wretchedly by sin, that there was no help that could restore man other than through

him that made man. And he that made man out of love, by that same love would he restore man to the same bliss, or one surpassing it. And just as we were made like the Trinity in our first making, our Maker wants us to be like Jesus Christ our Saviour in Heaven without end by the power of our remaking. Then between these two, for the love and honour of man, he would make himself as much like man in this mortal life, in our foulness and our wretchedness, as a man without guilt might be. Therefore, as I said before, this means that it was in the image of this likeness of our foul, black, mortal flesh that our fair, radiant, blessed Lord hid his Godhead.

[7] But most assuredly I dare to say, and we ought to believe, that there never was so fair a man, until that time when his fair colour was changed by toil and sorrow, suffering and dying. This is spoken of in the Eighth Revelation in the Sixteenth Chapter,[197] where more is said about the same image. And there it says of the Vernicle of Rome that it changes colour, sometimes more cheerful and animated, and sometimes more sorrowful and deathly, as may be seen later on.

[197] Following SLOANE. PARIS has *Second Revelation and Eighteenth Chapter*, because the scribe has got confused between the numbering of the Revelations and the numbering of the Chapters.

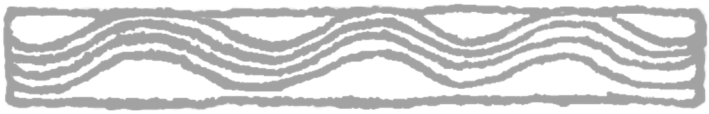
[8] And this vision was a lesson to my understanding, that the continual seeking of the soul greatly pleases God, for it may do no more than seek, suffer and trust. And this is brought about in every soul that does so, by the Holy Spirit, whereas the splendour of finding God comes from his special grace, when it is his wish. Seeking with faith, hope and love[198] pleases our Lord, and finding him pleases the soul and fills it with joy. And thus was my understanding taught that seeking is as good as finding, throughout that period during which he allows the soul to be at labour. It is God's wish that we go on seeking until we behold him, and it is because of this that he shall show himself through his special grace, when he wishes.

[9] And God himself will teach how a soul may behold him, and what will most honour him and bring the most profit to our souls, opening us to humility and virtue by the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit. For a soul that does nothing but fastens itself to God with true trust, either to seek him or behold him, is, it seems to me, honouring him as much as he may. There are two activities that can be seen in this vision. One is seeking, and the other is beholding. Seeking is common, that every soul may

[198] Translating *charitie*.

have with God's grace, and ought to have through the wisdom and teaching of Holy Church.

[10] It is God's wish that we bring three things to our seeking his gift. First, that we seek eagerly and diligently, without laziness, as it may be through his grace, gladly and joyfully, without unreasonable dejection or vain sorrow. Secondly, that for his love we await him steadfastly, without grudging or striving against him until our life's end, for it shall last but a while. Thirdly, that we trust him with all our might, having complete faith. For it is his wish that we know he shall appear to all who love him, suddenly and joyfully, for he works in secret, and he will be perceived and his appearing shall be swift and very sudden. And he wants us to trust him, for he is most homely and courteous. Blessed may he be.



CHAPTER 11

THE THIRD REVELATION, *how God does all things except sin, never changing his purpose without end, for he has made all things in perfection of goodness*

And after this I saw God in a point,[199] which is to say in my understanding – in this vision – I saw that he is in all things. I beheld with perceptiveness, seeing and knowing in this vision that he does all that is done. I marvelled at that sight with a gentle awe, and thought 'What is sin?' For I saw truly that God does all things, however little.

[2] And I saw truly that nothing is done by chance or fortune, but all by the foreseeing wisdom of God. If something appears by chance or fate to the sight of man, our blindness and lack of foresight is the cause. For those things that are in the foreseeing wisdom of

[199] Translating *I saw God in a poynte*. Julian's phrase carries a double sense. First, to 'see God in a point' is to apprehend the divine simplicity – God as unextended and indivisible being, the unity in which all creation subsists. Secondly, her insight here was given 'in a point': in an instant so brief that its suddenness reflects the very simplicity it discloses. The expression thus brings together ontology and experience, denoting both the oneness of God and the instantaneous act of insight by which Julian perceived that oneness. This vision recalls her earlier apprehension of the 'little thing' where she directly perceives the creation *as God sees it*. Here, this perception is turned round to *regard the creator himself*.

God – and have been so from before the beginning[200] (which rightfully and honourably he continually leads to the best end) – as they come about, befall us suddenly, and unexpectedly, and so through our blindness and our lack of foresight we conclude that these things happen by chance or fortune.

[3] This I understood in this Showing of love, for well I know, that in the sight of our Lord God, there is no chance or fortune. Therefore I need to grant[201] that all things that are done are done well, for our Lord God does everything. For I was not at this time shown the affairs of creatures,[202] but only of the presence of our Lord God in the creatures. For he is in the midpoint of all things and all that he does.

[4] And I was sure that he does no sin. And here I saw truly that sin is no deed, for in all this, sin was not shown. So I wondered no longer about this, but I watched our Lord, to see what he would show. And thus, in so far as it could be shown at this time, the rightfulness of God's actions was shown to my soul. Rightfulness has two fair properties. It is right, and it is full. And so be all the works of our Lord, needing the presence neither of mercy nor of grace, for all are

[200] Translating *fro without begynnyng*, from before the beginning [of time].
[201] Translating *behoved nedes to grant*.
[202] *Creatures* denotes all living things, human beings as well as animals, though Julian's emphasis is on people. *Creatures* is used in recognition of its cognate verb 'to create' for, of course, we are all created by God.

rightful, and nothing at all is lacking in them. And at another time, God showed naked sin, of which I shall later speak,[203] in which was shown the working of mercy and of grace.

[5] This vision was shown to my understanding because our Lord wants the soul turned truly to the beholding of him, and all his works in general. For they are full of goodness, and all his doings are comforting and pleasing, bringing great contentment to the soul, that is turned from the beholding of the blind judging of man to the fair, pleasing judging of our Lord God. For man considers some deeds well done and some deeds evil, but our Lord considers them not so, for as all that has being in nature is of God's making, so are all things that are done attributed to God's doing. For it is easy to understand that the best deed is well done, but as the best (and the highest) deed is done well, so is the least deed done well, and all are possessed of those properties and occur in the order that our Lord has ordained for them from before the beginning, for there is no doer but he.[204]

[6] I saw most truly that he never changes his purpose in any manner of thing, nor ever shall,

[203] Julian discusses sin in *Showing* 13; see especially LT38–40.

[204] See Ecclus 39:33–4, 'All the works of the Lord are good, and he will supply every need in its time. No one can say, "This is not as good as that," for everything proves good in its appointed time' (NRSV).

without end. For there is nothing unknown to him in his rightful ordering of things from before the beginning. And therefore all things are set in order and all things made as they should be, without end, and no manner of thing shall fail in this point, for he has made all things perfectly good.

[7] And therefore the blessed Trinity is always entirely pleased with all his works. And all this he showed most blessedly, intending this –

See, I am God.
See, I am in all things.
See, I do all things.
See, I never lift my hands from my work, and never shall, without end.
See, I lead all things to the end that I ordained for them from before the beginning, by the same power, wisdom and love from which I made them.
How should anything be amiss?

[8] Thus mightily, wisely and lovingly was my soul examined in this vision. Then I saw truly that I must needs assent[205] to God with great reverence and joy.

[205] Translating *Than saw I sothly that me behoved nedes to assent.*

CHAPTER 12

THE FOURTH REVELATION, *how God likes better to wash sin from us in his blood rather than with water, for his blood is most precious*

And after this, as I watched, I saw the body [of Christ] bleeding profusely, from the weals of the scourging,[206] in this manner: the fair skin was broken deeply into the tender flesh[207] with sharp blows all over the sweet body; the hot blood ran out so profusely that I could see neither skin nor wound, only, as it were, all blood, and when it came to where it should have dripped off, there it vanished. Nevertheless, the bleeding continued for a while, and I was able to deliberate upon it, and what I saw was such a plenteous flow

[206] The Gospel accounts of the flagellation of Christ are brief and sparse. Matt 27:26 informs us that '... [Pilate] had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified' (NIV). Mk 15:15 similarly reports that, '... after flogging Jesus, [Pilate] handed him over to be crucified' (NRSV). And Jn 19:1 says, 'Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head ...' (NRSV). In accordance with John, Matthew and Mark also include references to the crown of thorns, with similarly concise content.

[207] Created from Mary's female flesh, it was supposed that in consequence Christ's own flesh would itself exhibit an especially tender character, taking his vulnerability to physical suffering to unparalleled extremes.

that I thought that had this been happening in reality, then in this time it would have soaked the bed all in blood, and have spilled all over everything.

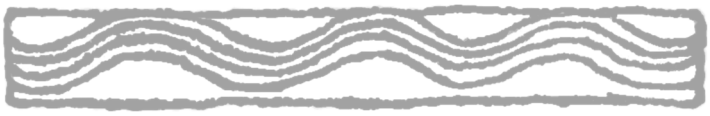
[2] Then it came to my mind that out of the tender love that he has for us, although God has made abundant the waters of the earth,[208] and put them at our service for the comfort of our bodies, yet he likes it even better that we take his blessed blood, wholly wholesome for us, to wash away our sin. For there is no liquid made that he likes to give us as much as this one. By virtue of the blessed Godhead, it is plentiful as it is precious. And it partakes in our own nature, blessedly overflowing in us by virtue of his precious love. The most dear blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, as truly as it is most precious, so truly is it most plentiful.

[3] Behold and see the power of the precious abundance of his most dear blood! It descended down into Hell and broke its bonds, freeing all those who were there, who belonged to the court of

[208] See Ps 65:9, 'You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it' (NIV).

Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), Christ's Descent into Limbo, c. 1510, woodcut.
(A public domain image from Wikimedia Commons.)

Heaven.[209] The precious abundance of his most dear blood overflows the whole earth, and is ready to wash away the sin of all creatures possessed of a good will, all who have been and all who yet shall be. The precious abundance of his most dear blood ascends up into Heaven in the blessed body of our Lord Jesus Christ.[210] And there he is, bleeding, praying to the Father for us, is there now, and shall be for as long as we have need.[211] And for evermore it flows throughout all Heaven, rejoicing in the salvation of all mankind who are there now, and who yet shall be, to make up the number that is yet lacking.



[209] This is a reference to Christ's Harrowing of Hell, when between the time of his Crucifixion and his resurrection Jesus broke open the gates of Hell, released the bonds of all the righteous souls incarcerated there, and brought them to Heaven. The story originates from the account given in the apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*. In Julian's version, it is the blood of Christ which itself undertakes this task.

[210] Referring to Christ's ascension into Heaven forty days after the resurrection. See Mk 16:19 and Lk 24:51.

[211] See Heb 7:29 '... he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them' (NRSV).

CHAPTER 13

THE FIFTH REVELATION *is that the temptation of the Fiend is overcome by the Passion of Christ to the increase of our joy and to his pain, everlastingly*

And after this, before God explained this with words, he allowed me to look upon him for an appropriate time, taking in all that I had seen, and understanding what it was, as much as a simple soul may. Then without voice or any opening of lips, he made these words appear in my soul, 'Through this is the Fiend[212] overcome.' For in these words our Lord meant his blessed Passion, which he had shown before.

[2] In this our Lord showed part of the Fiend's malice, and his utter powerlessness, for he showed that his Passion is the overcoming of the Fiend. God showed that the Fiend has the same malice now that he had before the Incarnation,[213] and also that he labours just as hard, but continually he sees that all

[212] i.e., Satan, or the Devil.

[213] The central doctrine of Christianity that the Second Person of the Trinity, Christ the Son, took on human form in the person of Jesus. It defines Jesus as being simultaneously fully divine and fully human; it is through this union that humanity will be reconciled to God.

those souls who are saved escape him gloriously[214] through the power of his[215] precious Passion. And this is his sorrow, and in his vast evil is he ashamed, for all that God allows him to do brings us to joy, but to him it brings shame and pain. And he has as much sorrow when God gives him leave to work as when he does not work,[216] and this is because he may never do as ill as he would like, for his strength is all locked in God's hands.[217]

[3] But there can be no wrath in God,[218] as I saw it, for our good Lord endlessly has regard for his own worthiness and to the profit of all those who shall be

[214] Translating *worshyppfully*.

[215] i.e., Christ's.

[216] This refers especially to the story of Job (see Job 1:6–12) where Satan is given permission to inflict all manner of sufferings and privations to press Job into forsaking God. It is a wager that Satan loses.

[217] In the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, Christ chains Satan during the Harrowing of Hell. See Rev 20:1–3 where the angel comes from Heaven with the key to the Abyss and the chain that will be used to bind Satan there for a thousand years.

[218] This presents a new, radical teaching on Julian's part, which challenges the numerous examples of God's wrath that feature in some of the books of the Old Testament, standing in opposition to the dominant theological outlook of her times which sees God as an angry judge under whose verdict on the Last Day each of us will be either admitted to Heaven where we will enjoy God's bliss for all eternity or otherwise doomed forever to eternal torment in Hell. Julian discusses anger (translating *wrath/wroth*) at intervals across the *Showings*: LT13.3, 40.1, 45.2, 46.3, 47.1, 48.1/4, 49.2–5, especially LT46–9.

saved. With power and justice he withstands the wicked, who from malice and wickedness busy themselves to counter and work against God's will.

[4] Also, I saw our Lord scorning[219] his malice and set at naught his powerlessness, and he wills that we do so too. Seeing this sight, I laughed out loud, and those who were with me laughed too, and I liked their laughter. I wished that all my fellow Christians had seen what I had seen, for then all of them would have laughed with me. But although I did not see Christ laughing,[220] well did I know that this sight he showed me made me laugh, for I understood that we may laugh, to comfort ourselves and rejoice in God, for the Fiend is overcome. And when I saw him scorn his malice, it was by leading my understanding into

[219] 'Scorn' (Middle English *scorne*) conveys more than simple contempt; it suggests complete rejection and utter disregard.

[220] There was a tradition in this period that Christ never laughed. In the Rule of Saint Benedict, laughter is condemned as the act of the fool. The concern is perhaps that laughter is too easily stimulated by vulgarity and finding pleasure in the misfortunes of others, and is therefore detrimental to the ideal Christian outlook. The questions as to whether Christ laughed, and regarding humour's capacity to destroy fear (and that without fear, faith is undermined) are major topics in Umberto Eco's novel, *The Name of the Rose* (1983), whose plot turns on trying to locate Aristotle's lost treatise on humour in the labyrinthine library of the monastery where the story is set: Aristotle's treatment is so potentially damaging to the Church that one of the monks is prepared to kill in order to keep it secret. At the end of the story, the lost book really is lost when it is consumed in a great conflagration.

our Lord; that is to say, an inward showing of certain truth, without any change in his countenance, and it seemed to me to be an admirable property of God, that he is everlastingly unchanging.

[5] And after this I became serious again, and said, 'I see three things – gaiety, scorn and commitment. I see gaiety in that the Fiend is overcome, I see scorn because God scorns him, and continues to scorn him, and I see commitment in that he is overcome by the blessed Passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ that was done through complete, magnificent commitment and with steadfast effort.' And where I said that he is scorned, I meant that God scorns him, which is to say that he sees him now, as he shall do, without end, for in this God showed that the Fiend is damned, and this I meant where I said that he should be scorned. For I saw that he shall be scorned on the Day of Doom generally, by all those who shall be saved, of whose salvation he has the greatest envy. For then he shall see that all the woe and tribulation that he has brought them shall be diverted to the increasing of their unending joy. And all the pain and sorrow that he would have brought to them shall forever go with him to Hell.

CHAPTER 14

THE SIXTH REVELATION *is of the honourable thanks by which he rewards his servants, and how it has three joys*

After this, our Lord said, 'I thank you for your services, and for the hard labour of your youth.' And in this my understanding was lifted up to Heaven, where I saw our Lord God as a lord in his own house, to which our Lord has called all his most dear friends[221] to a solemn feast.[222] Then I saw the Lord taking no place of honour in his own house, but I saw him royally reign in his house, filling it himself with joy and happiness, endlessly to gladden and comfort his most dear friends, most homely and most courteously, with the marvellous melody of the endless love in his own beautiful, blessed face, whose glorious countenance[223] of the Godhead fills all of Heaven with joy and bliss.

---

[221] SLOANE adds *and servants*.

[222] In religious works of this period, Heaven was often portrayed as a banquet, following the example of the parable of a wedding feast at Matt 22:1–14.

[223] Both 'face' and 'countenance' translate *chere*, the human face, specifically in its capacity to express emotion and one's inner character or mood.

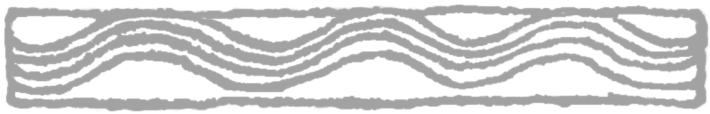
[2] God showed three degrees of bliss that each soul, who while on earth has served God willingly in whatever way, shall have in Heaven. The first is the glorious gratitude of our Lord God, which each shall receive when they are relieved of their suffering. This gratitude is so exalted and so honourable that each seems completely filled by it, even though nothing further may come to them. For I thought that all the pain and effort that might be suffered by all those who live, might not have deserved the honourable gratitude that shall be had by even one man who willingly serves God.[224]

[3] The second degree is that all the blessed creatures who are in Heaven shall see that honourable gratitude, and all who are in Heaven shall be made aware of his service. And at this point, this example was shown: a king, in thanking his subjects, shows great honour to them, and if he makes it known to everyone in the realm, then is that honour made all the greater.

[4] The third degree is that as much as it was pleasing when that gratitude was first offered, so shall it last without end. And I saw how homely and sweetly was it shown, that everyone's age shall be

[224] i.e., the gratitude that God extends to any one person who has suffered in life, in Julian's estimation, seems so large that it would more than suffice for everyone who has lived.

known in Heaven, and they will be rewarded for that willing service and for the time that they serve, and especially the age of those who willingly and freely offer their youth to God is very much rewarded and wonderfully thanked. For I saw that whenever, or for whatever time, a man or a woman was truly turned to God, even for just one day's service and to fulfil his endless purpose, they shall receive all these three degrees of bliss. And the more that the loving soul sees of God's courtesy, the more gladly does she serve him all the days of her life.[225]



[225] *Soul* in PARIS is given the feminine pronouns 'she' and 'her', though in SLOANE, *soul* is referred to as 'he'.

CHAPTER 15

THE SEVENTH REVELATION *concerns often feeling joy and sorrow, and how it is expedient that man sometimes is left without comfort, and that sin is not the cause of this*

And after this, he showed to my soul an outstanding spiritual happiness. In this happiness, I was filled with an everlasting certainty, securely lodged, free of all distressing anxiety. This feeling was so pleasant and so spiritual that I was in a state of perfect peace, comfort and rest, and there was nothing on earth that could grieve me. This lasted but a while, and I was again by myself,[226] turned back to the sorrowful weariness of my life, and the loathing I had for myself undid all the endurance required for living. There was no comfort nor any relief from my feelings, but faith, hope and love.[227] These I had, in truth, yet I could not feel that it was so.

[2] And soon after this, our blessed Lord once again gave me that comfort and that resting of my soul, a delight so secure and so blissful and powerful that no

[226] i.e., she is not aware of God's presence.

[227] Translating *cheryte*.

dread nor sorrow nor any bodily or spiritual pain that I might have suffered could have distressed me. But then that distress appeared again to my feeling, and then that joy and delight, and now the one and now the other at different times, I suppose about twenty times. And at those times of joy, I might have said with Saint Paul, 'Nothing can separate me from the love of Christ.'[228] And in my distress I might have said with Saint Peter, 'Lord save me, for I perish.'[229]

[3] This vision was shown to teach my understanding that it is helpful for some souls to experience things this way, at some times to be in comfort, and sometimes to fail in this and to be left by themselves.[230] God wishes us to know that he cares for us, that he keeps us safe always, both in woe and in well-being.[231] And for the benefit of his soul, a man is sometimes left by himself, although his sin is not ever the cause, for at this time I did not sin, on which account I should be left on my own, for it was

[228] See Rom 8:35, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?' (NIV).

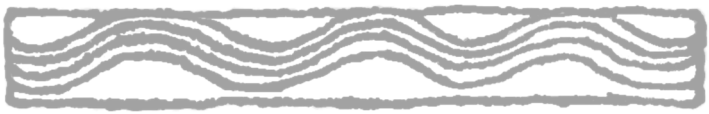
[229] See Matt 14:30, where Peter cries to Jesus when he too tries walking on the Sea of Galilee and is frightened by the wind and starts to sink. At Matt 8:25, the disciples as a group cry out to Jesus, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' as the storm worsens (NRSV).

[230] i.e., having a sense of being separated from God.

[231] Translating *weal*, meaning welfare, well-being, happiness, prosperity.

too sudden. Also, I did not deserve to have this blissful feeling, yet our Lord freely gives it when he wishes, and at other times lets us suffer in woe, doing both from the same, single love.

[4] For it is God's wish that we hold on to comfort with all our strength, for bliss is lasting without end, whilst pain is passing and shall come to nothing for those who shall be saved. Therefore it is not God's wish that we be guided by feelings of pain, in sorrow and grieving over them, but quickly pass them by, and hold on to the endless joy that is God.



CHAPTER 16

THE EIGHTH REVELATION *is of the last piteous pains of Christ's dying and the discolouring of his face and drying of his flesh*

After this, Christ showed the part of his Passion when he was close to death. I saw his sweet face, as it was then, dry and drained of blood, having the pallor of one dying, and then it turned even more pale, deathly, wasting away. After that, still closer to death, it turned blue. After that, the flesh turned brown-blue, as death took its hold. For his Passion was most clearly shown to me in his blessed face, especially in his lips, where I saw those four colours,[232] though before, they had been fresh and flushed, lively and pleasing to my sight.

[2] Then with death came this piteous change. I saw also his nose, withered and dried, and the sweet body become brown and black, all changed – and turned out of its fresh and living colour – to this dry dying. For at the time our blessed Saviour died upon the cross, there blew a dry, sharp wind, unnaturally

[232] Pallor, greater paleness, blue, brown-blue.

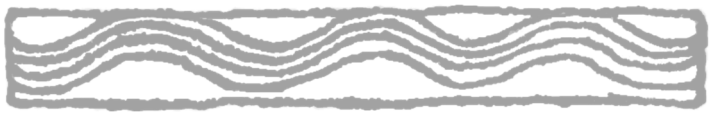
cold, it seemed to me.[233] And I saw that while all that precious blood that could bleed out of the sweet body had now passed from it, yet there remained some moisture in Christ's sweet flesh. But it was dried up by the loss of blood and pain from within, and by the blowing of the wind and cold from without, meeting together in the sweet body of Christ. And these four dried the flesh of Christ as time passed. And though this pain was bitter and sharp, yet in my sight it lasted a very long time. And the pain dried up all the living spirits of Christ's flesh.

[3] Thus I saw the sweet flesh dry, part after part, drying with astounding pain. And as long as any spirit was left in Christ's flesh, for as long did he suffer. This pain seemed so long to me as if he had been dead a week,[234] or rather dying, at the point of passing away, constantly suffering that great pain. And where I say that it seemed he had been dead a week, I mean that the sweet body was so discoloured, so dry, so withered, so deathly and so piteous, that it seemed he had been dead for a week, yet continually dying. And I thought the drying of

[233] Julian must have experienced not a few early, biting, Easters during which the wind blew across Norwich from the east, over the cold North Sea.

[234] Translating *sennyght*, seven nights. The same period of time through which Julian experienced her illness.

Christ's flesh brought the worst pain, and was the end of his Passion.



CHAPTER 17

Of Christ's grievous bodily thirst, caused in four ways, and of his piteous crowning and of the great pain of a loving companion

And by this drying[235] was brought to my mind these words spoken by Christ, 'I thirst.'[236] For I saw in Christ a double thirst, one in the body and another in the spirit, and these words were shown concerning the bodily thirst (as for what I was shown regarding the spiritual thirst, I shall talk of later[237]). And I understood that this bodily thirst was caused by the body's lack of moisture,[238] for the blessed flesh and bones were left all alone, without blood or moisture. The blessed body dried all alone for a long time, twisted by its own weight hanging on the nails. For I understood that because the sweet hands and sweet feet were so tender, the large, hard and grievous nails made the wounds grow wider, and under its own weight, left

[235] SLOANE has *dying*.

[236] See Jn 19:28, 'Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty' (NRSV).

[237] In LT31.2; see ST15.3.

[238] Following SLOANE.

hanging there a long time, the body sagged down.[239] And I saw the crown of thorns caked with dried blood, piercing and scraping the head, with the sweet hair sticking together the dry flesh and the thorns, and the thorns to the shrivelling flesh.

[2] And at the start, while the flesh was fresh and bleeding, the continual pressing of the thorns made the wounds open. And furthermore, I saw that the sweet skin and the tender flesh covered in hair and blood was all scraped and loosened by the thorns,[240] torn to shreds that were hanging down, as if they would soon have fallen off if the body had retained any natural moisture. How this was done, I could not see, but I understood the cause to be the sharp thorns, and the rough, grievous thrusting on of the garland, mercilessly, without pity, making them tear the skin and the flesh which the hair then loosened from the bone when they had been torn to shreds, like a cloth, and sagging downwards, giving the impression that they[241] would soon have fallen away for their heaviness and by being made loose.

---

[239] What in this account will today strike readers as graphic, or even bizarrely graphic, was quite normal in Julian's time.

[240] Some portrayals of Christ from Julian's era show him enduring not so much a 'crown' of thorns, but a 'helmet', something larger that rips into the entire surface of his head, and it seems likely that this is what Julian had in mind for these passages.

[241] i.e., both skin and flesh.

And in this was such a great sorrow and dread for me, for I thought that I would not, for my life, have seen it fall.

[3] This continued a while, after which it began to change again. And I watched and marvelled at how it could be, and then I saw it was because all around the garland it[242] had begun to dry and lose some of its weight, making as it were a garland within a garland. And the garland of thorns was dyed with the blood, and that other garland and the head were all the same colour, like clotted blood once it has dried. The skin of the flesh that showed on the face and on the body was finely wrinkled, having a tawny colour, like a dry board that has aged, with the face more brown than the body.

[4] I saw four types of drying. The first was bloodless. The second was followed by pain. The third was his hanging up in the air as when someone hangs out a cloth to dry.[243] The fourth was that of the body naturally craving liquid, yet there was no manner of comfort ministered to him. Ah, hard and grievous was that pain! But much more hard and grievous was it when the moisture failed, and all began to dry and wither. There were shown two pains in his blessed head. The first resulted from the

[242] i.e., the flesh.

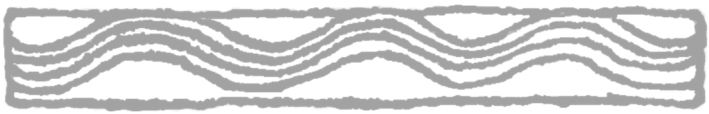
[243] The image of the cloth in the wind will recur at LT28.1.

drying body while it was still moist. And the other was slow, with withering and drying that resulted from the blowing of the wind that dried and pained him with cold, more than my heart can conceive. And all the other pains I saw may not be told, for whatever I may say of those pains would be too little. The showing of Christ's pains filled me full of pains myself, for I knew well that he suffered then but once, but he wanted to show them to me and make me remember them as I had before desired.

[5] And in all this time in Christ's presence, I felt no pain that was not Christ's pain. Then I realised that I knew very little of how awful would be the pain that I had asked for,[244] and like a wretch I repented of asking for it, thinking that if I had known what it would be like, I would have been loath to pray for it. For I thought my pain was worse than bodily death. I thought, 'Is there any pain in Hell like this?' And I was answered in my mind, 'Hell is another pain, for there is despair, but of all the pains that lead to salvation, this is the worst, to see the one you love suffer.' How could any pain of mine be greater, than to see him suffer, who is all my life, all my bliss and all my joy? Here I truly felt that I loved Christ so much more than myself that there

[244] i.e., the pain she had asked for in LT2.2.

was no pain that could be suffered like the sorrow I had when I saw him in pain.



CHAPTER 18

Of the spiritual martyrdom of Our Lady and others who love Christ and how all things suffered with him, good and ill

Here I saw, in part, the compassion that our blessed Lady Saint Mary had for Christ, and she was so united[245] in love that the greatness of her love was the cause of the greatness of her pain. For in this I saw the substance[246] of natural love, maintained by grace, that his creatures have for him, which natural love was most completely shown most abundantly in his sweet mother. For as much as she loved him more than all others, so did her pain surpass that of all others. For the higher, the more powerful, and sweeter that love is, the greater is the sorrow suffered by the one who loves, to see that beloved body in pain. And so all his disciples and all those who truly loved him suffered a greater pain than when their own bodies were dying. For I am sure, through my own feeling, that the least of

[245] Translating *onyd*, oned. Julian is using 'one' as a verb, to make one, or be one. She uses this expression throughout the *Showings*.
[246] i.e., its essence, what it really is.

them loved him so much more than they loved themselves, more than I can say.

[2] Here I saw a great unity between Christ and us, as I understand it. For when he was in pain, we were in pain, and all creatures capable of suffering pain suffered with him (that is to say, all creatures whom God has made to serve us). The firmament and the earth failed for sorrow, in accordance with their own natures, at the time of Christ's dying.[247] For it belongs naturally to their proper attributions to know him as their Lord upon whom depends all their power. And when he failed, through their own natures they had to fail with him,[248] in so far as was possible, in sorrow for his suffering. And thus, those who were his friends suffered pain through their love. And without exception, everyone, that is to say, all those who did not know him, suffered with the failing of all manner of comforts, except only the mighty secret of God's care.

[3] I am thinking of two types of people who did not know him,[249] represented by these two individuals; one is Pilate, and the other is Saint

[247] Julian is referring to the Gospel accounts of the earthquake and eclipse that followed Christ's dying (Matt 27:45, 51, Lk 23:44–5).

[248] Translating *And whan he failed, then behoved nedes to them for kindnes to faile with him.*

[249] Julian means to draw the distinction between those who did not convert to Christianity, and those who did.

Denis of France,[250] who at this time was a pagan, for when he saw wonders and marvels, sorrows and terrors that happened at this time, he said, 'Either the world is now ending, or else he who is nature's Maker is suffering.'[251] Thus did he write on an altar, 'This is an altar of the Unknown God.'[252] God, who of his goodness makes the planets and the elements to serve according to their nature the blessed man and the cursed, at that time withdrew his goodness from

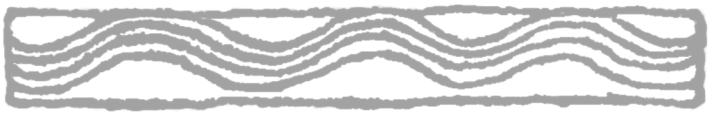
[250] See the Appendix by Fr John-Julian (2009, 396–8). There are three Dionysiuses to take into account here who, until the 16th century, were identified as the same person. One is Dionysius the Areopagite who is the only named convert in Athens recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 17:34). A quote in Eusebius tells us that this Dionysius became the first Bishop of Athens. Then there is Dionysius, the martyr of Gaul, the first Bishop of Paris (third century), who later became Saint Denis, the patron saint of France. And there is an anonymous 6th-century mystical theologian, who wrote under the pseudonym 'Dionysius the Areopagite' (probably in Syria), on which account he was originally identified with the Dionysius in Athens described in Acts, which gave apostolic authority to his writings whose themes were a major contribution to the Western mystical tradition (Aquinas, for instance, quotes him 1,700 times). Julian here identifies the first two Dionysiuses.

[251] This wording follows closely that given in the account of James of Voragine's Life of Dionysius in his work *The Golden Legend*, which includes detailed descriptions of the natural disasters that occurred at the time of Christ's Passion (see the note in Watson and Jenkins).

[252] This is the altar that Paul saw in Athens, which prompts him to proclaim to the Athenians that this Unknown God is in fact the God of the Christians (Acts 17:23).

both. This accounts for those who did not know him feeling sorrow at that time.

[4] Thus did our Lord Jesus suffer[253] for us. And we all stand together in that very suffering, and shall do so until we come to his bliss, as I shall say later.[254]



[253] PARIS uses the term *payned*, meaning 'to cause to suffer pain', but SLOANE uses the expression *nawted*, meaning 'to render as naught, nothing, despised, insulted, debased'.
[254] See LT21.

CHAPTER 19

Of the comforting beholding of the Crucifix and how the desire of the flesh without consent of the soul is no sin, and the flesh must be in pain, suffering until both are united in Christ

At that moment I wanted to look away from the cross, yet dared not, for I well knew that while I was gazing upon the cross, I was secure and safe. Therefore I could not assent to put my soul in peril. For there was no refuge from the fear of Fiends[255] other than the cross.

[2] Then I had a suggestion come into my mind, as if it had been spoken to me in a friendly voice, 'Look up to Heaven, to his Father.'[256] And then I saw

---

[255] i.e., agents of Satan, believed at this time to attend the dying for the purpose of making them forsake God at the point of death and thereby come under Satan's dominion.

[256] At this time it was the custom, when death seemed imminent, for the dying person to lift their eyes towards Heaven, towards the destination they hoped they would be taken in every expectation that, as they passed out of this life, they would see the glory of God. Julian would have expected her curate to instruct her to look up to Heaven, requiring her to remove her gaze from the Crucifix. In this context, she would indeed have anticipated a 'friendly' voice: that of her curate, giving her instruction. Yet Julian's remarking '*as if* it had been spoken ... in a friendly voice', implies that the voice was not actually friendly, just trying to seem so: in

clearly with the faith that I felt that there was nothing in between the cross and Heaven that could have distressed me. Here, I was compelled to look up or else to answer.[257] I answered inwardly with all the strength of my soul, and said, 'No. I dare not. For you are my Heaven.' This I said because I would not [avert my gaze]. For I would rather have been in pain till Doomsday than have come to Heaven other than through him. For I know well that he who bound me in such pain would unbind me when he wishes.

[3] Thus was I taught to choose Jesus as my Heaven, whom I saw only in pain at that time. I wished for no other Heaven than Jesus, who shall be my bliss when I come there. And this has always been a comfort to me, that I chose Jesus as my Heaven, by his grace in all this time of suffering and sorrow. And this has been a lesson to me, that I should evermore do so, choosing only Jesus for my Heaven, in well-being and in woe. And though as a

---

which case, did she take it that this was a diabolical voice trying to trick her into doing the wrong thing? In this instance, Julian wanted to keep her gaze upon the crucifix and not lift it upwards, because here, in the cross, was her security and safety. In this perspective, she may have anticipated that the Fiends would try to trick her, contrary to the norm, to look up to Heaven, away from the security of the crucifix. This leaves us bemused as to why, a couple of sentences later, Julian addresses the voice in the second person, '... you are my heaven'. Now, she appears to be speaking to Christ, and neither to her curate nor to the Fiends ...

[257] Translating *and either me behoved to loke uppe or elles to answere.*

wretch I had repented (as I said before, if I had known what pain it would bring, I would have been loath to have prayed for it), now I saw that really this was the grumbling and frailty of the flesh to which my soul did not assent, to which God attributes no blame.[258]

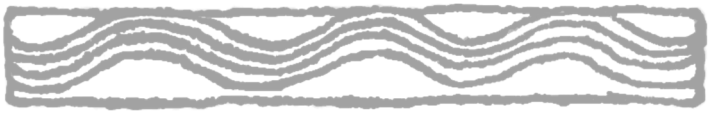
[4] Regret and consenting choice are two opposing things, though I felt both at the same time. And they have two parts, one outward and the other inward. The outward part is our mortal flesh, which is now in pain, now in sorrow, and shall always be so in this life, and this I felt greatly at this time, and this was the part of me that felt regret.[259] The inward part leads an exalted and blessed life, all at peace, filled with love, and this is more secretly felt. And it is through this part where mightily, wisely and willingly I chose Jesus as my Heaven, and in this I saw truly that the inward part is master and ruler over the outward part, neither blaming nor taking heed of its desires, turning all its intent and desire endlessly upon being united[260] with our Lord Jesus. That the outward part could draw the inward part to agree with it was not shown to me, but that the

[258] According to the theological outlook of Julian's time, thoughts or actions are sinful only when one's soul assents to them.

[259] i.e., regretting that she had prayed to share in Christ's suffering, because it had turned out to be so intense.

[260] Translating *onyd*, oned. *Onyd* appears again in the next sentence.

inward part draws the outward part, through grace, and both shall be united in endless bliss through Christ's power, this was shown.



CHAPTER 20

Of the unspeakable Passion of Christ and of three things regarding the Passion always to be remembered

And thus I saw our Lord Jesus languishing for a long time, for his union with the Godhead gave strength to his humanity, through love, to suffer more than anyone else could. I mean not only more pain than anyone else might suffer, but also that he suffered more pain even than might be told or fully conceived by any of those who are saved, who ever lived from the very beginning down to the Last Day – considering the worthiness of the highest, honourable king and his shameful and cruel, painful death – because he who is highest and most worthy was foully condemned and utterly despised.[261] For the principal point that may be seen in this Passion is to think and know that it is God

[261] See Phil 2:5–8, 'Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross' (NRSV).

who suffered,[262] seeing after these two less important points: *what* he suffered, and *for whom* he suffered.

[2] And in this he brought to my mind some part of his majesty and nobility of the glorious Godhead together with the preciousness and vulnerability of the blessed body, which are united together, and also the loathing that is in our nature for suffering pain. He was as tender and pure as he was strong and powerful in his capacity to suffer. And for the sin of everyone who shall be saved, he suffered. And he saw and sorrowed in kindness and love for everyone's sorrow, desolation and anguish. For in as much as our Lady sorrowed for his suffering, so much did he suffer sorrows for her sorrows.[263] And moreover, in as much as his sweet humanity was by nature more worthy, for the time that he was mortal, he suffered for us and sorrowed for us.[264] And now that he is

[262] Julian's thought throughout the Showings repeatedly circles back to the Incarnation. And here, having already spent some time dwelling on the human torment of Jesus, she now acknowledges the divine reality that is enshrined within that suffering. The theological upshot is that our pain and Christ's pain are one and the same. No matter the source or the extent of our suffering, Jesus is present with us in its midst, experiencing and knowing what is present to us in a way that could not possibly be more intimate. This is one aspect of what *oneing* means.

[263] Christ cannot prevent the suffering had by his mother as she witnesses his passion, but he can share her sorrow.

[264] God cannot remove our suffering, but through the Incarnation he enters into it *with us*.

risen up, no longer mortal, yet he still suffers with us, as I shall say later.[265]

[3] And beholding all this by his grace, I saw how strong was that love which he has for our souls, and that he willingly chose that suffering with great longing. And meekly he suffered it with great joy, for that soul which beholds it thus, when it is touched by grace, shall see that those pains of Christ's Passion exceed all other pains, that is to say, those pains shall be turned into everlasting joy in virtue of Christ's Passion.

[SLOANE Chapter 21 starts here, preceded by this rubric:]

Of three beholdings of the Passion of Christ and how we are now dying on the cross with Christ, but his countenance puts away all pain

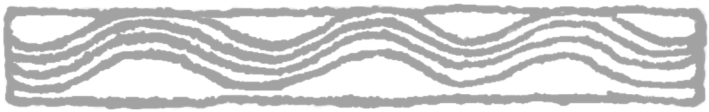
It is God's will, as I understand it, that we have three ways of beholding his blessed Passion.[266] First, is beholding the hard pain that he suffered with contrition and compassion,[267] and this our Lord showed at this time, giving me the strength and

[265] See LT22 and 23.

[266] The first occurs here, the second *beholding* appears at LT22.4, and the third *beholding* is at LT23.1.

[267] Contrition and compassion: two of the three wounds for which Julian expresses her desire at LT2.5.

grace to see it. And although I watched with all my might for his passing away, expecting to see the body altogether dead, I did not see this happen. And just at this very moment I thought that his life could not possibly last any longer and the showing of the end must be very close.[268]



[268] Translating *shewing of the ende behoved nedes to be nye.*

CHAPTER 21

[PARIS Chapter 21 starts here.]

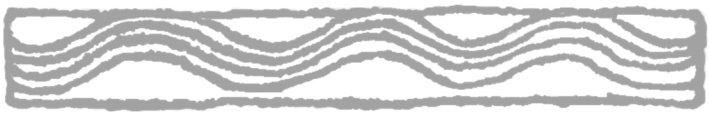
Suddenly, as I gazed upon the same cross, I saw his blessed facial expression suddenly change to joy. The changing of his blessed countenance changed mine, and I was as glad and happy as I could possibly be. Then our Lord brought cheerfully to my mind, 'Where now is any trace of your pain or of your anguish?' And I was full of happiness. I understood that we are now, as our Lord intends, on the cross, dying with him in our pain and suffering. And if we willingly stay there, on the same cross, with his help and grace waiting for the last moment,[269] we shall suddenly see his expression change, and we shall be with him in Heaven. Between the one and the other shall be but a single moment,[270] and then shall we all be brought into joy. And this is what he intended when he said in this Showing, 'Where now is any trace of your pain or of your dread?' And we shall be filled with bliss.

[2] And here I saw truly that if he now showed to us his blessed face, there would be no pain on earth,

[269] Translating *poynt*.

[270] Translating *tyme*.

nor in any other place, that could trouble us, and all things would be to us joy and bliss. But because he shows to us his suffering countenance as in life he bore his cross, thus are we in distress and suffer with him, as our nature dictates. And the cause of his suffering is that he wishes, in his goodness, to make us heirs with him in his joy. And for the little pain that we suffer here, we shall have a complete, endless, knowing of God which we might otherwise never have. And the harder our pains that we have suffered with him on the cross, the greater shall our honour be, with him in his Kingdom.



CHAPTER 22

THE NINTH REVELATION *concerns taking delight in beholding three Heavens, and the infinite love of Christ desiring every day to suffer for us, if he might, although it is not needed*

Then our good Lord spoke and asked me, 'Are you satisfied that I suffered for you?' I said, 'Yes, good Lord, thank you. Yes, good Lord, may you be blessed.' Then Jesus, our good Lord said, 'If you are satisfied, I am satisfied. It is a joy, a happiness, an endless delight to me that I ever endured such suffering for you. And if I could have suffered more, I would have suffered more.' In this inward feeling,[271] my understanding was lifted up into heaven. And there I saw three Heavens,[272] at the sight of which I greatly marvelled, and thought, 'I see three Heavens and all the blessed humanity of Christ. And none is more, none is less, none is higher, none is lower, but each alike is bliss.'

[271] This is the feeling Julian records above at the opening to LT21.1, when she sees Christ's expression change to joy, making her as 'glad and happy as I could possibly be'.

[272] i.e., three states of bliss or profound happiness, that correlate with the three persons of the Trinity at LT23.1.

[2] For the first Heaven,[273] Christ showed me his Father, but not in bodily appearance, but in his nature and in his actions. That is to say, I saw in Christ what the Father is. The action of the Father is found in this, that he gives recompense to his Son, Jesus Christ. This gift and this reward is of such great joy to Jesus that his Father would have given him no reward that could have better pleased him. The first Heaven, that is the satisfaction felt by the Father, appeared to me as a Heaven full of great joy, for he is greatly pleased by all the deeds done by Jesus regarding our salvation. On which account we are his not only through his redeeming us, but also by the courteous gift of his Father we are his bliss,[274] we are his reward, we are his honour, we are his crown.[275] And this was especially wonderful, and wholly delightful to behold, that we should be his crown.

[273] The use of *for* here has the same function as it does in, 'For breakfast he gave me toast.' See LT23.1 for the second and third Heavens.

[274] The Father gives to the Son the gift of humanity whom the Son has redeemed through his Passion. Later, at LT55.1, the Son returns the gift to his Father in Heaven, which the Father then courteously returns to the Son.

[275] As the crown of thorns symbolises Christ's suffering consequent upon humanity's sinning, it can also be understood as a crown of victory that celebrates our eventual salvation and, indeed, at LT51.25, the crown has transformed – it seems – into the usual sort of precious metal more appropriate for that celebration.

[3] These things of which I speak are so great a happiness to Jesus that he thinks nothing of all his toil and suffering and of his cruel and shameful death. And in these words, 'If I could have suffered more, I would have suffered more,' I saw truly that as often as he could die, as often he would, and love would never let him have rest until he had done it. And I watched with great diligence to see how often he would have died, if he could. And truly the number passed my understanding and my wits to such a degree that my reason could not and did not comprehend or grasp it. And when he had thus often died, or would die, he would yet set it at naught for love, for to him everything seems so little when compared to his love. For though in his dear humanity, Christ could suffer but once, his goodness made him always ready to offer every day to do it again, should it be needed. For if he said he would out of love for me make new Heavens and new earths,[276] it would by comparison be such a little thing, for he could do this every day, if he wanted to, without any effort. But to die for his love of me so often that the number exceeds my own comprehension, this is the most wonderful gift that

[276] See Is 65:17, 'See, I will create new heavens and a new earth' (NIV), and 2 Cor 5:17, 'So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!' (NRSV).

our Lord God can make to man's soul, as far as I can see.

[4] This then is his intention, 'How could it then be that I would not for my love of you do all that I could, the doing of which grieves me not at all, since I would for my love of you die again and again, having no concern for my severe suffering?' And here I saw the second way of beholding his blessed Passion,[277] that the love that made him suffer it surpasses all his pains, as far as Heaven is above the earth. For the Passion was a noble, precious and honourable deed done at one moment of time through the action of love, which love was without beginning, is and shall be, without end, of which love he spoke most tenderly these words, 'If I could suffer more, I would suffer more.' He did not say, 'If more suffering were needed,' but 'If I could suffer more.' For although it was not necessary, if he could suffer more, he would.

[5] This deed and his work concerning our salvation was ordained as well as God might ordain it. It was done as honourably as Christ might do it. And here I saw complete happiness in Christ, for his happiness could not have been complete if it could have been done better than it was done.

[277] This is Julian's second way of beholding the Passion; the first occurs at LT20.4, and the third at LT23.1.

CHAPTER 23

How Christ wishes us to rejoice with him greatly in our redemption and to desire that by his grace we may do so

And in these three words, 'It is a joy, a bliss, and endless delight to me,' were shown three Heavens,[278] thus: for the joy, I understood the pleasure of the Father; and for the bliss, the honour of the Son; and for the endless delight, the Holy Spirit. The Father is pleased, the Son is honoured, and the Holy Spirit is delighted. And in this I had the third beholding[279] regarding his blessed Passion, that is to say, the joy and the bliss that makes him delight in it.

[2] For our courteous Lord showed me his Passion in five ways, of which the first is the bleeding of the head[280], the second the discolouring of his blessed face[281], the third is the abundant bleeding of the body[282] from the scourging, the fourth is the intense drying.[283] These four relate to the pain of the

[278] i.e., supremely blissful experiences.
[279] The first beholding appears at LT20.4 and second occurs at LT22.4.
[280] See LT5, 7,2.
[281] See LT10.1/5, 16.1–2, 17.3.
[282] See LT12.1, 16.1–2, 17.3
[283] See LT16.3, 17.1/40. SLOANE has *dying*.

Passion, as I said before. But the fifth that was shown relates to the joy and the bliss of the Passion.

[3] For it is God's wish that we truly delight with him in our salvation, and in this he wishes that we be most greatly comforted and strengthened, and through this he wishes that our souls be joyfully filled with his grace, for we are his bliss. For in us he delights without end. And so shall we in him, through his grace. All this that he does for us and has done, and shall ever do, was never a cost nor a hardship to him, and never could be, except only that he died sharing our humanity, beginning at the sweet Incarnation and lasting until the blessed resurrection on Easter Morning. Only for this time did he bear the cost and hardship that paid for our redemption, the doing of which he always rejoices in endlessly, as I said before.

[4] Jesus wishes that we pay heed to the delight taken by the blessed Trinity in our salvation, and that we desire to have ourselves as much spiritual pleasure, with his grace, as I said before. That is to say, that the pleasure we take in our salvation should be like the joy had by Christ in our salvation, as well as we may, while we are here [in this life]. The whole Trinity was at work in the Passion of Christ, through him, to bring us an abundance of virtue and a plenitude of grace – though only the Maiden's Son

suffered[284] – on account of which the whole Trinity rejoices.[285] And this was shown through these words, 'Are you well pleased?' And by these other words that Christ spoke, 'If you are well pleased, I am well pleased,' as if he had said, 'It is a joy and a pleasure enough for me, and I ask for nothing else of you for my suffering but that I may please you.'

[5] And in this he brought to my mind the nature of a glad giver.[286] Always a glad giver takes but little heed of the thing that he gives, for all his desire, all his intent, is to please him and comfort him to whom he gives it. And if the receiver takes the gift gladly and thankfully, then the generous giver sets at naught all his cost and all his hardships for the joy and delight he has, because he has pleased and comforted the person he loves. In a thorough and complete way was this shown.

[6] Reflect thoughtfully on the word 'ever'.[287] For in this was shown a great sign of the love that he has for our salvation, with its manifold joys that follow

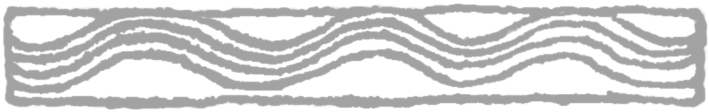
[284] That is, the human Jesus, not the divine Christ.

[285] SLOANE adds *endlessly*.

[286] See 2 Cor 9:7, 'Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver' (NIV).

[287] She is referring to the sentence spoken by Jesus at LT22.1, 'It is a joy, a happiness, an endless delight to me that I ever endured such suffering for you.'

from the Passion of Christ. One is that he feels pleasure for having indeed done it, and shall suffer no more. Another is that through doing this he has relieved us from the endless pains of Hell. Yet another is that he brought us up to Heaven and made us his crown and his endless bliss.



CHAPTER 24

THE TENTH REVELATION *is that our Lord Jesus showed in love his blessed heart cloven in two, in joy*

With a cheerful face and looking on with joy, our good Lord gazed into his side, and with his sweet glance he directed the understanding of his creature through the same wound into his side,[288] and there he revealed an attractive and delightful place, large enough for all mankind who shall be saved to rest here in peace and in love. And through this he brought to mind his most dear blood and his precious water[289] which he let pour out for love. And through this sweet vision he showed his blessed heart cloven in two. And with this sweet rejoicing[290] he showed to my understanding, in part, the blessed Godhead as far as he may at this time, strengthening my poor soul in its understanding, as far as may be expressed, by

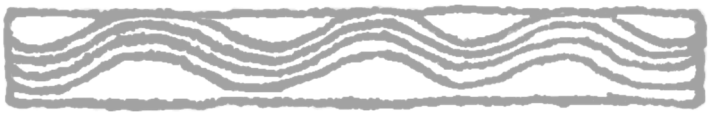
[288] This is the wound in Jesus' side, inflicted by the soldier using his spear, to make sure that the execution by crucifixion had been successful; see Jn 19:34. This wound, which gives access to Jesus' heart, was a major topic in medieval devotion.

[289] This is the fluid that flowed from the wound.

[290] Following SLOANE.

which I mean the endless love that had no beginning, now is, and shall be for ever.

[2] And with this, our good Lord said most blessedly, 'See how I love you,' as if he had said, 'My darling, look and see your Lord, your God who is your Maker and your endless joy. See your own brother, your Saviour. My child, look and see what delight and bliss I have in your salvation. And for my love, rejoice with me.' And also, to understand better what he had said, he spoke these blessed words, 'See how I love you,' as if to say, 'Look and see that I loved you so much before I died for you, that I would die for you. And now I have died for you, and suffered willingly all that I could. And now has all my bitter pain and all my hard suffering turned to everlasting joy and bliss, for me, and for you. How could it now be that you should pray for anything that pleased me but that I should not most gladly grant it to you? For what pleases me is your sanctity and your endless joy and bliss with me.' This is the meaning, as simply as I can say, of his blessed words, 'See how I love you.' Our good Lord showed this to make us glad and cheerful.



CHAPTER 25

THE ELEVENTH REVELATION *showing an exalted, spiritual showing of his Mother*

And with the same expression of delight and joy, our good Lord looked down to his right, bringing to my attention the place where our Lady stood at the time of his Passion,[291] and he said, 'Would you like to see her?' And with these sweet words, it was as if he had said, 'I know well that you would like to see my blessed Mother, for after myself, she is the greatest joy that I can show you, and most pleasing and honourable to me, and of all my blessed creatures, she is the one they most desire to see.' And because of the marvellous, supreme and special love that he has for this sweet Maiden, his blessed Mother, our Lady Saint Mary, he showed her happy and joyful, as if this is what these sweet words mean, as if he said, 'Would you like to see how I love her, so that you can rejoice with me in the love that I have for her, and she for me?'

[291] Scenes of the Crucifixion traditionally portray Mary located on Jesus' *right side*, resulting in her being on their viewers' *left side* as they observe the depictions.

[2] And also to better understand these sweet words, our good Lord speaks with love to all mankind that shall be saved, as if all were one person, as if he said, 'Would you like to see in her how you are loved? For my love of you, I have made her so exalted, so noble, so worthy, and this delights me, and so I wish that it delights you.' For after him, she is the most blessed sight. But in this I am not taught to long to see her bodily presence while I am here [on earth], but the virtue of her blessed soul, her truth, her wisdom, her love,[292] through which I am taught to know myself, and to reverently stand in awe of my God.

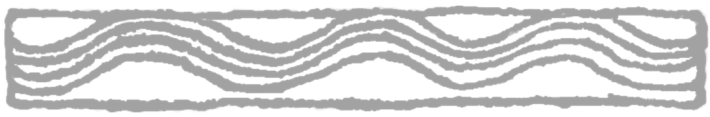
[3] And when our good Lord had shown this, he spoke these words, 'Would you like to see her?' I answered and said, 'Yes, good Lord, thank you. Yes, good Lord, if that be your wish.' Often I had prayed for this, hoping to see her physical appearance, but I never did see her. Yet now, Jesus with those very words showed me a spiritual vision of her; in contrast with how I had seen her before, weak and lowly,[293] he now showed her exalted and noble and glorious, and pleasing to him above all creatures.

[292] Translating *cheryte*.

[293] Referring to her experience in LT7.1, during the First Revelation.

And so he wishes it to be known that all who delight in him should delight in her.[294]

[4] And for my greater understanding, he showed this example: if a man should love someone exclusively above all others, he wants to make everyone else love and to delight in that person whom he loves so much. And these words that Jesus spoke, 'Would you like to see her?' I thought were the most delightful words that he could have given me, and with the spiritual vision of her that he gave to me. For our Lord showed me nothing special, but our Lady Saint Mary, and her he showed three times. The first was when she conceived, the second in her sorrow under the cross, and the third, as she is now, in delight, honour and joy.



[294] SLOANE adds, *and in the delight that he has in her and she in him.*

CHAPTER 26

THE TWELFTH REVELATION *is that the Lord our God is the Supreme Being*

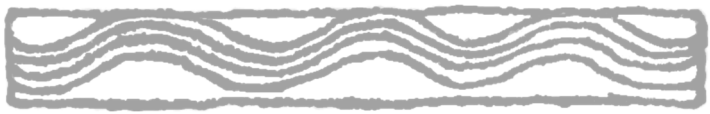
And after this our Lord showed himself in even greater splendour than I had seen him before, in which I was taught that our soul shall never have rest until it comes to him, knowing that he is full of joy, homely and courteous and gracious, and life itself.

[2] Often our Lord Jesus said,

It is I.[295] It is I.
It is I who am the most exalted.
It is I whom you love.
It is I who pleases you.
It is I whom you serve.
It is I whom you long for.
It is I whom you desire.
It is I whom you intend.
It is I who am all.
It is I whom Holy Church preaches of and teaches you.
It is I who showed you myself, before.

[295] Translating *I it am*; this locution reappears at LT59.2.

[3] The number of these declarations exceeded my intelligence and my understanding and all my powers. In my view, they were the most exalted, for in them I comprehended – I cannot say what. But the joy that I experienced in their showing surpasses all that the heart can think or the soul could desire. And therefore these words are not declared here, but let each man receive them as our Lord intends, through the grace of the understanding and love that God gives.



CHAPTER 27

THE THIRTEEN REVELATION *is that our Lord God wishes that we have great regard to all his deeds that he has done in the great nobility of making all things, and how sin is known only through suffering*

And after this, our Lord brought to my mind the longing that I had for him earlier on,[296] and I saw nothing holding me back but sin. And so I saw generally for all of us. And I thought that if there had been no sin, we would all have been pure, and like our Lord, as he made us. And thus in my folly, before this time, I often wondered why, by his great foreseeing wisdom, God had not prevented sin from coming into being. For then, I thought, all would have been well.

[2] I should have shunned these thoughts, but nevertheless I mourned and sorrowed over their consideration, unreasonably, without discretion. But Jesus, in this vision, informed me of all that I needed, answered through these words and said, 'Sin is inevitable,[297] but all shall be well, and all shall be

[296] This is the wound of 'deep longing for God', introduced at LT2.5.

[297] Translating *behovely*, meaning both necessary and fitting; also carrying the connotation of beneficial, proper and appropriate. Adam's sin was

well, and all manner of thing shall be well.'[298] With this blunt word 'sin', our Lord brought to my mind, in general, all that is not good, and the shameful contempt and the uttermost suffering[299] that he bore for us in this life, and in his dying, and all the pain and suffering of all his creatures, in spirit and in body. For we shall all in some degree be tormented,[300] and we shall be tormented as was our master Jesus, until we are fully purged of our mortal flesh and of all our inner emotions which are not truly good. And this I beheld, together with all the suffering that ever was and ever shall be. And compared to that, I understood that Christ's Passion was the most painful, surpassing all those others. All this was shown through the slightest touch, and it quickly passed away, turning to a sense of comfort,

---

necessary (in consequence of which all further sin is now possible) for the Incarnation, which was part of God's plan from before the creation.

[298] This is the first time that this phrase occurs in the *Showings*. That *alle shalle be wele* is perhaps Julian's most enduring refrain. Holloway (2003, xii, xviii) holds that Julian had been educated in Hebrew, could read the Old Testament in its original language and, hence, that she purposefully chose the expression 'all shall be well' as a translation of the Hebrew שָׁלוֹם, *shalom*, meaning peace, harmony, the absence of conflict, and by extension ' ... a totalizing of wellness, goodness, oneness, creation and Creator in harmony' (2003, xviii). 'Shall' in Middle English carries the implication of necessity. Julian therefore means that everything is both *going to be* well, and also *must of necessity* be well.

[299] Translating *trybulation*.

[300] Translating *trobelyd*.

for our good Lord does not wish that the soul be afraid of this ugly sight.

[3] But I did not see sin. For I believe that it has no manner of substance, nor any part of being, nor might it be known but by the suffering that it causes.[301] And, as I see it, this suffering is present but for a while, for it purges us, making us know ourselves and ask for mercy, for the Passion of our Lord is a comfort to us against all this, for this is his blessed wish. And for the tender love that our good Lord has for all who shall be saved,[302] he comforts us readily and sweetly, meaning this, 'It is true that sin is the cause of all suffering. But all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.'

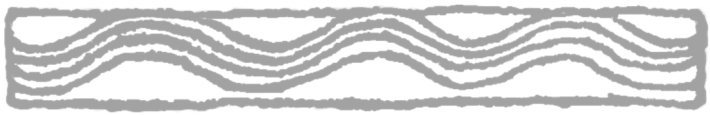
[4] These words were spoken most tenderly, placing no manner of blame upon me, nor upon any who shall be saved.[303] Thus was it a great unkindness for me to blame, or wonder at God for my sin, because he does not blame me for sinning. And through these very words I saw hidden in God an

[301] Sin is thus the lack of something positive, the lack of love and good will, not the presence of something negative that has any sort of existential being in its own right.

[302] The notion of 'all who shall be saved' was introduced in LT9.1–2.

[303] That we are not blamed by God for our sin is a recurring topic in the *Showings*. See LT28.2, 39.3, 45.2, 50.2, 51.3/19/20, 52.7, 53.1, 80.4 and 82.2.

exalted, marvellous mystery,[304] whose secret he will openly reveal and make known to us in Heaven, in the knowing of which we will truly see the reason for his allowing sin to exist, and in the seeing of which, we shall have endless joy.[305]



[304] For further mysteries, see LT30.2, 32.3/5 and 34.1.

[305] SLOANE adds, *in our Lord God.*

CHAPTER 28

How the children of salvation shall be shaken in sorrows, but Christ rejoices with compassion, and a remedy against tribulation

Thus I saw how Christ has compassion for us because of our sin. And just as I was before filled with pain and compassion at the sight of Christ's Passion, likewise was I now partly filled with compassion for all of my fellow Christians. For most dearly does he love those people who shall be saved, that is to say, God's servants. Holy Church shall be shaken in sorrow and anguish and tribulation in this world, as someone shakes a cloth in the wind.[306] And to this our Lord answered me in this way, 'A great thing shall I make of this in Heaven, a thing of endless honour and everlasting joy.' Yes, as far as this did I see that our Lord rejoices in the tribulations of his servants with pity and compassion, and to bring to bliss each person that he loves, he lays on them something that in his sight bears no fault, by which they are disparaged and despised in this world, scorned and mocked and cast

[306] This image of the cloth in the wind appeared before, at LT17.4, where it is a reference to Christ's body hanging on the Cross.

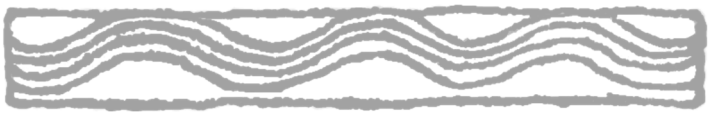
out, and this he does to prevent the harm that would come to them from the pomp and pride and vainglory of this wretched life, and to make their way ready for coming to Heaven in bliss everlasting, without end, for he says, 'I shall utterly rend you from your vain affections and your vicious pride, and after that I shall gather you up and make you meek and mild, pure and holy, by uniting you with me.' And then I saw that each kind compassion that with love a man has for his fellow Christians is Christ within him.

[2] That same degradation that he showed in his Passion was shown again in this compassion, in which there were two ways to understand our Lord's meaning. One is the bliss to which we will be brought,[307] in which he wants us to delight. The other is for comfort in our suffering, for he wants us to know that it shall all be turned to honour[308] and to profit by virtue of his Passion, and to know that

[307] When 'all shall be well', as recounted in the previous chapter.

[308] In Julian's Middle English, *honour* had a broad and deeply significant meaning, encompassing ideas of virtue, reputation, and social standing. Julian mentions (at intervals throughout the *Showings*) the honour that *we owe to God*, but here, she is emphasising the dignity and respect that *God owes to us*. Julian refers frequently to the honour that is owed to us; see for instance LT14.2–3, 21,2, 28.2, 33.1, 35.1, 36.1–2/4, 38.1–2, 39.3–4, 40.1, 41.4, 42.4, 48.4, 49.5, 52.7, 59.1, 62.1. She of course also refers to the honour that we owe to God; see for instance LT2.3, 3.1, 5.7, 6.2, 10.9, 36.7, 42.4, 62.1.

we suffer nothing alone, but with him, seeing him as our ground, and that we see his suffering and his tribulations surpass completely all those that we may suffer, beyond all comprehension. And the proper beholding of this will save us from grumbling and despair when we feel our pains, as long as we truly see that our sin deserves it. Yet his love excuses us, and in his great benevolence he does away with all our blame, and looks over us with compassion and pity, as children, not loathsome, but innocent.



CHAPTER 29

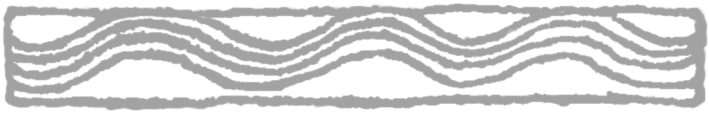
Adam's sin was greatest, but the atonement for it is more pleasing to God than ever was the sin harmful

But here I lingered, thinking about all this in general, sorrowful and grieved, saying this in my thoughts to our Lord, with complete reverence, 'Ah, good Lord, how may all be well, for through sin great harm comes to your creatures?' And here I dared to hope that my thoughts might be eased by some further, clear, explanation. And to this our blessed Lord answered most meekly, and with a most kindly expression, and told me that Adam's sin was the greatest harm ever done, or that ever shall be, until the world's ending, showing also that this is openly acknowledged throughout Holy Church on earth.

[2] Furthermore, he instructed me to consider the glorious Atonement.[309] For this Atonement is more pleasing to the blessed Godhead, and more efficacious for man's salvation, without comparison, than ever was the sin of Adam harmful. This then is what our blessed Lord intends, that through this teaching we should take heed of this, 'For since I

[309] Translating *asseeth*, following Watson and Jenkins.

have made well what is most harmful, then it is my wish that you know by this that I shall make well all that is less harmful.'



CHAPTER 30

How we should enjoy and trust in our Saviour Jesus, not presuming to know his privy council

There were two parts to my understanding of this.[310] One part concerns our Saviour and our Salvation. This blessed part is open, clear, fair and light and abundant. For all mankind that has a good will, and all who yet shall be, are enclosed in this part. To this we are bound by God, and drawn to it and counselled and taught inwardly by the Holy Spirit, and outwardly by Holy Church, through the same grace. In this our Lord wants us to be occupied, rejoicing in him, as he rejoices in us. And the more abundantly we partake of this, with reverence and meekness, the more thanks we deserve from him

[310] These 'two parts' of her understanding are referred to as two kinds of 'secret' in LT34.1: the first being the 'great deed' that will be done on the Last Day, and the other comprising the secrets that God revealed in the Showings to Julian. In the following chapters, Julian will discuss these 'two parts' as two types of 'deed' that God will perform in order that 'all shall be well'. The 'open' deed ('our Saviour and our Salvation'), appears in LT31 and LT34–40. The secret deed, God's *prevy councelle*, appears in LT32.3–5 and 33.3.

and the more we benefit ourselves, and thus may we say, rejoicing, 'Our portion is our Lord.'[311]

[2] The other part is hidden and held back from us, that is to say, everything that is not relevant to our Salvation, for that is our Lord's privy council, and it is right that the royal lordship of God should hold his privy councils in peace,[312] and it is fitting that his servants, out of obedience and reverence, should not wish to know of his counsels.

[3] Our Lord has pity and compassion for us because some creatures concern themselves with these matters, and I am sure that if we knew how greatly we would please him and ease our concerns by leaving all this alone, we would. The saints in Heaven wish to know nothing, except only what our Lord wants to show them, and their love[313] and their desire are governed by the will of our Lord. And so ought our wishes be the same as theirs. Then we shall not wish for anything, nor have any desire for anything but the will of our Lord, just like them.[314] For in God's purpose we are all one. And in this was I

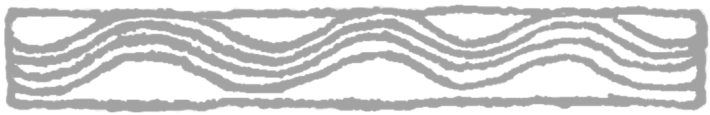
[311] See Ps 16:5, 'Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure' (NIV).

[312] God is here modelled on an earthly king who discusses matters of state with his privy council.

[313] Translating *charyte*.

[314] i.e., the saints.

taught that we should rejoice only in our blessed saviour Jesus, and trust in him for everything.



CHAPTER 31

Of the longing and the spiritual thirst of Christ, which lasts and shall last until Doomsday, and by reason of his body he is not yet fully glorified nor yet beyond suffering

And here our good Lord answered all the questions and doubts that I might have,[315] saying most comfortingly, 'I may make all things well. And I can make all things well. And I shall make all things well. And I will make all things well.[316] And you shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well.' I understood 'I may' to be said by the Father. And I understood 'I can' to be said by the Son. And I understood 'I will' to be said by the Holy Spirit. And I understood 'I shall' to be said by the unity of the blessed Trinity, three persons in one truth. And where he says, 'You shall see for yourself,' I understood that this refers to the uniting of all

[315] Perhaps those that were raised in LT11.1 and 29.1.

[316] The terms *may*, *can*, *shall* and *will* have different senses in Middle English: *may* means 'can' in the sense of having the capacity or power to make all things well; *can* means having the knowledge required to do this, as in 'Oh, yes. I can do that'; *shall* expresses the definite intention of doing so; and *will* means having the wish to do so. These are the conditions that must be present for any agent to act: the agent must possess the power or capacity to act (*may*); they must know how to act (*can*); must have the definite intention of doing so (*shall*); and must want to act (*will*).

mankind that shall be saved into the blessed Trinity. And in these five words[317] God wishes that we be enclosed in rest and peace.

[2] And thus shall the spiritual thirst of Christ come to an end. For this is the love-longing, signifying Christ's yearning for us that lasts and ever shall until we see that sight at Doomsday, for we who shall be saved, and shall be Christ's joy and his bliss, are yet here [on earth], and some are yet to come, and so shall it be until that [last] day. Therefore, this is his thirst and his love-longing to have us all together here in him in endless bliss, as I see it. For we are not now as wholly in him as we shall be then.

[3] For we know in our faith, as was also shown in all [the Showings] that Christ Jesus is both God and man. And with respect to the Godhead, he is himself the highest bliss, and was so from before the beginning, and shall be, without end, and this true,

[317] The words that open this chapter number only four: *may*, *can*, *shall* and *will*. We can arrive at *five* words by adding in the *shall* from 'you shall see for yourself' which comes immediately after. We may note that *may*, *can*, *shall*, *will*, and *shall* (again), are lettered in red ink in PARIS, both in the opening sentence and in the brief analysis that follows: so, presumably, these are the five words that Julian means to reference. Though, possibly, the words are in red because the scribe is imposing their own interpretation on the text that was not clear in the source for PARIS. Note that the PARIS scribe has rendered the phrase in the previous sentence *Thou shalt se thy selfe* using precisely five words.

endless bliss may never in itself be increased or decreased. And this was abundantly clear in every Showing, especially in the twelfth, where he says, 'It is I who is most exalted.' And regarding Christ's humanity, it is known in our faith, and also shown [in the Showing] that through the power of the Godhead, out of love to bring us to his bliss, he suffered pains and torments, and died.

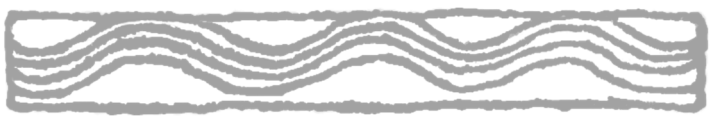
[4] And these are the works of Christ's humanity, in which he rejoices, and which he showed in the Ninth Showing where he says, 'It is a joy, a happiness, and endless delight to me that I ever endured such suffering for you.' And this is the bliss of Christ's work, and thus he means where he says in the same Showing that we are his bliss, we are his reward, we are his honour, we are his crown. [318] For, with respect to Christ being our head,[319] he is glorified and free from suffering. And with respect to his body in which all his members are knit, he is not yet fully glorified nor beyond all suffering, for that same thirst and longing that he had upon the cross, which desire, longing and thirst, as far as I could see, were in him from before the beginning, the same he

[318] See LT22.2.

[319] See Eph 4:15, 'Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.' (NIV).

has still, and shall have until the time when the last soul that shall be saved has come up into his bliss.[320]

[5] For as truly as there is a property in God of compassion and pity, so truly is there a property in God of thirst and longing. And by the power of this longing in Christ, we have to long, in our turn, for him, without which no soul comes to Heaven. And this property of longing and thirst comes from God's endless goodness, just as the property of pity comes from his endless goodness, and yet, although he has longing and pity, they are different properties, as I see it, and here we find the essential feature of spiritual thirst, which is that it lasts in him for as long as we are in need, drawing us up into his bliss. And all this was seen in this Showing of his compassion, and that it will cease at Doomsday.[321] Thus he has pity and compassion for us. And he has a longing to have us, but his wisdom and his love do not let the end come until the best time.



[320] See Jn 12:32, 'And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself' (NRSV).

[321] Because at this point, Christ's compassion will have been fulfilled.

CHAPTER 32

How all things shall be well and scripture fulfilled, and we must be steadfast in the faith of Holy Church as Christ wills

At one time, our good Lord said, 'All manner of thing shall be well,' and at another time he said, 'You shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well.' And my soul found different ways to understand these two [statements]. One was this, that he wants us to know that not only does he pay attention to great and noble things, but also to little and small things, to plain and simple things, as much to one as to the other. That is what he means when he says, 'All manner of thing shall we well,' for he wants us to know that even the least thing shall not be forgotten.

[2] The other understanding is this, that there are many evil deeds done in our sight, and such great harms inflicted that it seems to us that it is impossible that any good end could come of it. And upon this, therefore, we gaze in sorrow and grief, such that we cannot rest in the blissful contemplation of God as we should. And the cause of this is that our capacity for reason is now so blind, so debased and so inadequate that we cannot know the exalted and marvellous wisdom, and power and the goodness of

the blessed Trinity. And that is what he means when he says, 'You shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well,' as if he had said, 'Take this now in faith and trust, and at the ending of the world you shall truly see it,[322] in complete joy.'

[3] And thus, with the same five words spoken before, 'I may make all things well [etcetera],'[323] I took the most profound comfort in all the works of our Lord God that are yet to come. As I understand it, there is a deed which shall be done[324] by the blessed Trinity on the last day, but what this deed shall be and how it shall be done are not known by any of the creatures are that beneath Christ, and shall remain so until that deed be done, when the goodness and love of our Lord God wants us to know what it shall be.[325] And his power and wisdom, through that same love, will conceal it and hide from us what it shall be and how it shall be done. And the reason as to why he wants us to understand matters this way is that we be all the more at ease in

[322] That 'all manner of thing shall be well'.

[323] She is referring to LT31.1, with its 'may', 'can', 'shall', 'will', 'shall'.

[324] This 'deed which shall be done' becomes 'the great deed', below, in LT32.4. This was earlier referred to as 'an exalted, marvellous mystery' in LT27.4; it is the 'great deed' that will make all things well on the Last Day. It is the deed which redeems creation from the pain of sin, the point at which all human suffering will cease for all eternity.

[325] See Mk 13:32, 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father' (NRSV).

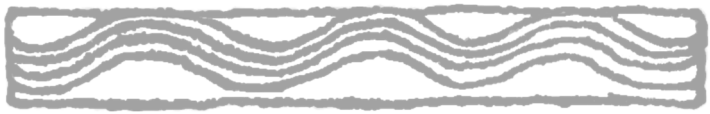
our souls and all the more at peace in our love, leaving aside the beholding of all tempests that might prevent us from truly rejoicing in him.

[4] This is the great deed ordained by our Lord God from before the beginning, treasured and hidden in his blessed breast, known only to himself, by which deed he shall make all things well. For just as the blessed Trinity made all things from nothing, so the same blessed Trinity shall make well all that is not well. And this vision filled me with great wonder, as I considered our faith, which I will explain thus. Our faith is grounded in God's word, and it is a part of our faith that we believe that God's word shall be upheld in all things. And one central theme of our faith is that many creatures shall be damned, including those angels who from pride fell out of Heaven, who are now Fiends, and also many on earth also who die outside the faith of Holy Church, which is to say, those who are heathen, and also many who have received Christianity but live unchristian lives, and so die separated from the love [of God].[326] All these shall be damned to Hell without end, as Holy Church teaches me to believe.

[5] And dwelling on all this, I thought it impossible that all manner of thing should be well, as our Lord showed at this time. And for this I had

[326] Translating *cheryte*.

no other answer in my Showing of our Lord but this, that 'What is impossible for you is not impossible for me.[327] I shall uphold my word in all things, and I shall make all things well.' And in this I was taught by the grace of God that I should steadfastly hold to the faith as I had understood it earlier, and with that I should persist, and firmly believe that all manner of thing shall be well, as our Lord showed at that same time, for this is the great deed that our Lord God shall do, through which deed he shall uphold his word in all things. And he shall make well all that is not well. But what this deed shall be, and how it shall be done, there is no creature beneath Christ that knows it, nor shall know it until it is done, according to the understanding of our Lord's meaning that I had at this time.



[327] See Matt 19:26, Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible' (NIV); Lk 1:37, 'For nothing will be impossible with God' (CSB); Lk 18:26–7, 'Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God"' (NIV).

CHAPTER 33

All damned souls are despised in the sight of God, like the Devil, and these Revelations withdraw not the faith of Holy Church, but comfort us, and the more we busy ourselves about God's secrets, the less we know

And yet in this[328] I desired, as far as I dared, that I might have had some vision of Hell and Purgatory, though it was not my intention to put to the test anything that belongs to our faith. For I believed truly that Hell and Purgatory are for the very end that Holy Church teaches, but my intention was that I might have seen something through which I could learn about everything that belongs to my faith, through which I might live better to God's honour and to my profit. Yet despite my desire, I could see of this absolutely nothing, other than what I reported before from the Fifth Showing, in which I saw the Devil reproved by God and endlessly damned, through which I understood that regarding all creatures who share in the Devil's condition in this life and at their ending, no more mention was made of them before God and all his

[328] i.e., in contemplating the topic of the previous chapter.

holy ones,[329] than was made of the Devil, in spite of the fact that they are of human kind, whether they have been Christened or not.

[2] For though the Revelation showed goodness in which was made little mention of evil, I was not however drawn as a result of that from any point of faith that Holy Church teaches me to believe, for I had seen the Passion of Christ in several different Showings, in the First, in the Second, in the Fourth,[330] and in the Eighth,[331] as I said before,[332] when I had in part felt the sorrow of our Lady, and of his true friends who witnessed his suffering, yet I did not see the Jews who put him to death specifically identified, although I knew through my faith that they were cursed and damned without end, saving those who were converted through grace. And I was strengthened and taught to keep the faith in every detail and without exception, in every respect as I had before understood this, trusting that in so doing I was upheld by God's mercy and grace, and desiring and praying with earnest intention that I might continue in it until my life's end.

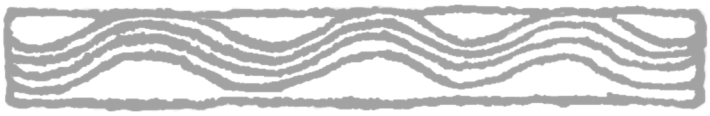
[329] i.e., saints.

[330] SLOANE has 'Fifth'.

[331] See LT4–9 in the First Showing, LT10 in the Second, LT12 in the Fourth, and LT18 in the Eighth Showing.

[332] See LT23.

[3] It is God's wish that we pay considerable regard to all the deeds that he has done, through which he wants us to know about, trust in, and believe in all that he shall do.[333] But we must always put aside all concern as to what the deed shall be,[334] and desire to be like our brethren, that is, like the saints in Heaven who wish for absolutely nothing but what God wishes. Then shall we rejoice only in God, and be well rewarded, with both what he hides and with what he shows. For I saw truly in our Lord's meaning that the more we busy ourselves to know of his secrets in that or any other thing, the further shall we be from knowing it.



[333] ST15.5 adds: And this he showed me in these words, when he said, 'And you shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well.' This I understood in two ways: first, I am fully content that I do not know it, and also I am pleased and happy that I shall know it.

[334] This is the 'great deed' mentioned in LT32.4–5, God's final deed that at the end of the world, through which he shall make all things well.

CHAPTER 34

God shows the secrets that are necessary for those who love him, and how they greatly please God receiving diligently the preaching of Holy Church

Our Lord showed two kinds of secret. One is this great secret with all its secret aspects belonging to it. And these secrets he wants us to understand will be kept hidden until such time that he will clearly show them to us. The other kind comprises the secrets which he himself openly showed in this Revelation, for these are secrets that he wants to open and make known to us, for he wants us to know that it is his wish that we know them. They are kept secret from us, not only because he wants them to be secret, but they are kept secret from us because of our blindness and ignorance. And for this he has great pity, and therefore he will open them to us himself, through which we may know him and love him and cleave to him, for all that is helpful for us to understand and know, most courteously our good Lord will show us what it is through all the preaching and teaching of Holy Church.

[2] God showed the very great pleasure that he has in all those men and women who eagerly and wisely

receive the preaching and teaching of Holy Church, for he is Holy Church,[335] he is the ground, he is the foundation,[336] he is the teaching, he is the teacher, he is the end, and he is the reward for which every kind soul toils, and this is known, and shall be known, to each soul to whom the Holy Spirit declares it. And I hope truly that all who thus seek shall be helped, for they seek God.

[3] All this that I have now spoken, and more that I shall say later, is comforting against sin. For in the Third Showing,[337] when I saw that God does all that is done, I did not see sin, but I saw that all is well. But when God did show sin to me, then he said, 'All shall be well.'[338]

[335] Cf. LT60.4.
[336] Translating *substance*.
[337] LT11.1/3.
[338] LT27.3.

CHAPTER 35

How God does all that is good and through his mercy nobly suffers everything, and this shall cease when sin is no longer suffered

And when God Almighty had shown his goodness so abundantly and so fully, I desired to know, regarding a certain creature that I loved, if they should continue to lead a good life,[339] which I hoped by the grace of God had already begun, but in this particular desire it seems that I hindered myself, for I was not taught about this at the time. But then I was answered in my understanding, as it were by a friendly intermediary, 'Accept all [these Showings] as they apply generally, and consider the kindness of your Lord God in his showing them to you, for God is better honoured in seeing him in everything than in any particular thing.' I assented, and in this I learned that God is more honoured by my knowing everything in general than by my taking pleasure in any particular thing. And if I followed this teaching wisely, I

[339] Prophetic insights into the welfare of others, deceased or living, was accepted as part of the visionary experience at this time (see the note in Watson and Jenkins). In the Short Text, the use of the female pronoun 'her' shows that this person is a woman.

should not be glad of any particular thing, nor greatly distressed by any manner of thing, for all shall be well.

[2] For the fullness of joy is to see God in everything. For by the same blessed power, wisdom and love through which he made all things does our good Lord lead them all, continually, to the same end, and there shall he bring everything to him. And when it is time, we shall see it. And the ground of this was shown in the First [Showing],[340] and more openly in the Third,[341] where I said, 'I saw God in an instant of time.' All that our Lord does is in all respects right, and all that he allows is beneficial. And in these two [Showings] are comprehended good and evil, for all that is good, our Lord does, and all that is evil, our Lord allows. I am not saying that evil is praiseworthy, but I say that our Lord's allowing it is praiseworthy, by which his goodness shall be known without end, and his wonderful benevolence and kindness by the working of mercy and grace.

[3] Righteousness is that thing which is so good that it may not be better than it is, for God himself is fully righteous, and all his works are rightly done, as they have been ordained from before the beginning by his great power, his great wisdom, his great

[340] See LT5.8.
[341] See LT11.

goodness, and just as he has ordained it for the best, just so does he work continually to lead everything to the same end. And he always takes the greatest pleasure in himself and in all his works. And the beholding of this blessed disposition is most sweet to the soul that sees it, through grace. All the souls that shall be saved in Heaven for all time, are made righteous in the sight of God, and by his own goodness in whose righteousness we are unendingly and marvellously preserved above all other creatures.

[4] And mercy is an action that comes from the goodness of God. And it shall remain acting for as long as sin is allowed[342] to pursue righteous souls.[343] And when sin is no longer allowed to pursue them, then the action of mercy shall cease,[344] and then shall everything be brought into righteousness, and there remain for all time. By his allowing this[345] we fall, and by his blessed love, through his power and his wisdom, are we preserved, and by mercy and grace are we raised to extensive, abundant joy. And thus in

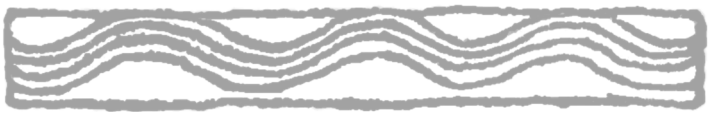
[342] Translating *sufferyd*.

[343] This thought calls to mind the story of Job, where God has a wager with Satan, that no matter the severity of the suffering that Satan will be permitted to heap on Job, he will never abandon God. God of course wins the wager.

[344] The action of mercy shall cease because at this point in God's plan, it has fulfilled its function.

[345] Translating *by hys sufferannce*.

righteousness and in mercy he wishes to be known and loved, now and unendingly. And the soul that through grace wisely sees this takes pleasure in both, and rejoices endlessly.



CHAPTER 36

Of another excellent deed that our Lord shall do, which through his grace may be known in part, and how we should rejoice in it, and how God yet performs miracles

Our Lord God showed that a deed shall be done,[346] and he himself shall do it. And it shall be honourable and wonderful and abundant, and it shall be done by him. And he himself shall do it.[347] And this is the greatest joy that the soul can comprehend, that God himself shall do it, although I shall do nothing but sin. And my sin shall not prevent the working of his goodness.

[2] And I saw that comprehending this is a heavenly joy to a reverent soul who evermore, by grace, naturally desires God's will. This deed shall be begun here,[348] and it shall be honourable to God and

[346] This is a new deed, another one, in addition to the great deed recounted in LT32.3–5 that will make all things well, that shall be done on the Last Day. Through this new deed, everything shall be 'brought into righteousness', and maintained in that state for all time, as we were just told in LT35.4.

[347] Fr John-Julian conjectures in his note that one aspect of this deed may be the fact of Julian's writings becoming known to us in these modern times.

[348] In contrast with the great deed at LT32.4, which will be done all in one moment, on the Last Day, not in this world, but the next.

abundantly beneficial to all those who love him here on earth, and when we come to Heaven we shall see it with wondrous joy. And this is how it will continue to work until the last day, and the honour and the bliss of it shall continue in Heaven, before God and all his holy saints, without end. Thus was this deed seen and our Lord's meaning understood, and the reason for his showing it is to make us rejoice in him and in all his works.

[3] When I saw that the [Thirteenth] Showing continued, I understood that it was shown for the great thing that was to come, that thing which God showed that he himself would do, that deed which has the properties already described. And this was shown most blessedly, intending that I should receive it wisely, faithfully and truly, but what the deed shall be, it was kept secret from me. And in this I saw that that he does not want us to fear knowing the things that he shows. He shows them because he wants us to know them, through the knowing of which he wants us to love him and delight in him, and endlessly rejoice in him. And for the great love that he has for us, he shows us all that it is honourable and beneficial at this present time. And these things that he wishes now to keep secret, yet in his

great goodness he shows them hidden,[349] in which showing he wants us to believe and understand that we shall indeed see them, in his unending bliss. Thus we ought to rejoice in him for all that he shows and for all that he hides,[350] and if we willingly and meekly do so, we shall find in this a great comfort, and endless thanking shall we have from him.

[4] And this is how I understood these words, 'That it shall be done by me, that is, for mankind in general,' that is to say, for all who shall be saved. 'It shall be honourable, wonderful and abundant, and it shall be done by me.' And God himself shall do it. And this shall be the greatest joy that may be seen in the deed, that God himself shall do it, while man shall do nothing but sin.

[5] This, then, is what our good Lord means, as if he said, 'Behold and see. Here you have grounds for patience, here you have grounds for love, here you have grounds for knowing yourself,[351] here you have grounds for rejoicing in me. And for my love, rejoice in me, for of all things, in this may you most please

[349] That is, we know them only in the sense that we know they *are there*, they will *eventually feature* in God's scheme for the world, but we are not to know any details at this time.

[350] See Ecclus 3:23, 'Do not meddle in matters that are beyond you, for more than you can understand has been shown to you' (NRSV).

[351] SLOANE has *grounds for humility* (using the verb *noughten*, to set at naught, regard as nothing, despise, shun).

me.' And for as long as we live this earthly life, whenever in our folly we turn to regard those who are wicked, tenderly our Lord touches us and blessedly calls us, saying in our soul, 'Listen to me alone, my dear child, attend to me, I am enough for you.[352] Rejoice in your Saviour and your salvation.' And that this is how our Lord works within us, I am sure. The soul that is pierced with grace shall see it and feel it. And though it be so that this deed be truly undertaken for mankind in general, yet it does not exclude any particular individual,[353] for what our good Lord will do for his poor creatures is now unknown to me.

[6] But this deed and that other one spoken of before,[354] are not the same, but two different ones. But this deed shall be undertaken sooner, and shall be done when we come to Heaven and, to those whom the Lord imparts it, it may in some measure be known here [on earth], but the great deed spoken of before shall be known neither in Heaven nor on earth until it is done.

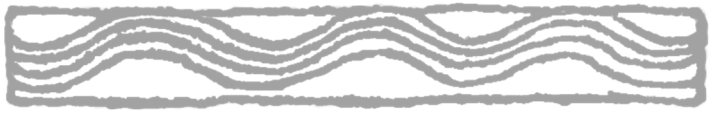
---

[352] See 2 Cor 12:9, 'But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."' (NIV).

[353] i.e., God does not exclude anyone. This is perhaps one of the clearest expression of Julian's universalist hopes. No one is excluded from living always in bliss in the presence of God, seeing God, aware that God is regarding them.

[354] i.e., the great deed of LT32.3–5.

[7] And furthermore, he gave me a special understanding and teaching regarding the working and showing of miracles, thus, 'It is known that I have performed many miracles here before, most exalted and wonderful, honourable and splendid, and so as I have done, I do now continually, and shall in times to come.'[355] It is known that sorrows and anguish and troubles come before miracles, and this is so that we should know our own feebleness and wickedness into which we have fallen through sin, to humble us and make us cry to God for help and grace. And splendid miracles come after that, from the supreme power and wisdom and goodness of God, showing his virtue and the joys of Heaven, as far as may be in this passing life, and for the strengthening of our faith, and to increase our hope through love.[356] Thus it pleases him to be known and honoured through miracles. This, then, is what he intends: he does not want the sorrows and tempests that fall on us to bear on us too heavily, for it has ever been so before the coming of miracles.



[355] Suggesting that the new deed discussed in this chapter will feature miracles.

[356] Translating *charyte*.

CHAPTER 37

God keeps those he chooses most securely, although they sin, for in them is a godly will that never assented to sin

God brought to mind that I would sin, and because of the delight I had in contemplating him, I did not at once pay attention to this [Thirteenth] Showing. And our Lord most kindly[357] waited, and gave me grace to pay attention. And this Showing I took particularly to apply to myself. But by all the kindly assurance that followed, as you shall see,[358] I was taught to apply it to all my fellow Christians in general, and not just to myself in particular.

[2] Although our Lord showed me that I would sin, by me alone he means everyone. And in this I conceived a slight concern, to which our Lord answered, 'I watch over you most surely.' These words were spoken with more love and assurance of spiritual protection than I could ever say, for just as it was shown to me that I would sin, so too was I

[357] Translating *marcifully*.

[358] See especially LT78 and 79.

shown the comfort and safe keeping of all my fellow Christians.[359]

[3] What could make me love my fellow Christians more than to see that God loves all who shall be saved, as though they were all one soul? For in every soul that shall be saved is a godly[360] will that never assented to sin, nor ever shall.[361] Just as there is a brutish will in our lower nature that cannot desire anything good, there is a godly will in our higher nature which is so good that it can never desire evil, but only ever good. And thus does he love us, and thus do we endlessly please him. And this our good Lord showed in the wholeness of love, that we dwell in his sight, yes, that he loves us now while we are here as well as he shall when we are there, before his blessed face. But from our own failing in love comes all our suffering.

---

[359] See Rom 4:8, 'Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them' (NIV); and Ps 32:2, 'Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit' (NIV). See also Rom 7:21–5: 'Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me. ... What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!' (NIV).

[360] ST has 'goodly'.

[361] See 1 Jn 3:9, 'No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God' (NIV).

CHAPTER 38

How the sins of the chosen shall be turned to joy and honour, with the examples of David, Peter, and John of Beverley

And God showed that sin shall be no shame to man, but to his honour,[362] for just as every sin receives its appropriate punishment, so for every sin the same soul receives a loving joy. Just as various sins merit various punishments depending on how serious they are, just so shall they be rewarded in Heaven with various joys in accordance with how much pain and sorrow they caused the soul on earth,[363] for each soul that comes to Heaven is so precious to God, and the place so honourable,[364] that the goodness of God never permits any soul that sins to come there unless such sinners are rewarded with surpassing

[362] Translating *wurshype*, meaning honour, esteem, high respect, worthiness, merit.

[363] Following SLOANE.

[364] Translating *wurshypfulle*, worthy of reverence, meriting great respect and admiration.

honours[365] and made known to Holy Church on earth and also in Heaven.[366]

[2] For in this vision my understanding was lifted up to Heaven. And then God brought joyfully to my attention David,[367] together with others without number, from the Old Law. And from the New Law[368] he brought to my attention first Mary Magdalene,[369] then Peter and Paul,[370] Thomas[371] and

[365] Translating *over passyng wurshypes*, exceedingly magnificent respect; the highest possible esteem.

[366] Following PARIS: ... *the goodnes of god sufferyth nevyr that soule to synne fynally that shalle come ther. But what synners they are that so shalbe rewarded is made knowen in holy church in erth and also in heaven by over passyng worshypes*; SLOANE has ... *the goodnes of God suffrith never that soul to synne that shal come there but which synne shal be rewardid. And it is made knowen without end, and blisfully restorid be overpassyng worshipps.*

[367] This is David from the Bible, the second king of Israel and Judah, who committed adultery with Bathsheba.

[368] i.e., from the Old and New Testaments, respectively.

[369] In this context, Julian is identifying Mary Magdelene with the sinful woman whom Jesus forgives in Lk 7:36–50.

[370] Peter is referenced here because he denied Jesus three times (Matt 26:69–75), and Paul is listed because before his conversion he persecuted the Christians (Acts 8–9).

[371] AMHERST records this as Thomas of India (ST17.3). This is Thomas the Apostle, who in the Acts of Thomas (a 3rd-century apocryphal text) is reported to have travelled to India decades after the Crucifixion to continue his apostolic mission. He is listed here because he doubted the resurrection (Jn 20:19–23).

Jude,[372] Saint John of Beverley[373] and others without number, and how, with their sins, they are recognised by the Church on earth, but whose sins are of no shame to them, but all are turned to honour. And therefore our kind Lord shows them to us *here* [in this life, in their sin and its honouring] only partially, whereas *there* [in the next life] they will be revealed in their perfection, for there, the token of sin is transformed into honour.[374]

---

[372] Jude (possibly she means the apostle who wrote one of the NT letters) appears only in the PARIS manuscript, and if this is what Julian intended to write, we do not know of any sinful action that merits his inclusion here. Probably, Judas is intended.

[373] There is nothing in the basic biographical details that have come down to us (see Windeatt 2015, 193) concerning John of Beverley as to why Julian lists him here with well-known sinners. However, in the 1990s, A. R. Deighton at the University of Hull discovered a Dutch chapbook printed in Brussels c. 1512 which tells the story of *Jan von Beverley* who, having renounced the world to become a hermit, was tempted by the Devil into drunkenness, in which state he raped and murdered his sister. The story has a good ending, when Jan discovers his sister still alive in her grave, where for all those years she had been in paradise in the company of angels. Possibly this is the story that Julian had in mind when she entered John of Beverley into her list. See John-Julian 2009, 388–91.

[374] Translating *worshyppe* again. Thus, the 'token of sin' is transformed in the next life into an accolade, a badge of honour signifying merit. The use of italics in this sentence for *here* and *there* is of course sheer editorial licence, by which we hope we have captured the emphasis that Julian wishes to make in this sentence: how we judge things *here*, in this life, is not how we will judge them *there*, in the next.

[3] And because he is familiar to us, for our comfort our Lord showed Saint John of Beverley, most exalted, and brought to my mind how he is a kind neighbour, known to us. And God called him 'Saint John of Beverley' as clearly as we do, and with the most delighted and joyous manner, showing that he is a most exalted saint in his sight, and one most blessed, and here he mentioned that in his youth and in his tender years was a most dear servant of God, greatly loving and revering God. But nevertheless, God allowed him to fall, mercifully protecting him, so that he may neither perish nor waste time,[375] and afterwards raised him to a much greater grace. And because he lived with such contrition and humility, God has given him in Heaven abundant joys surpassing those that he would have had if he had not sinned or fallen. And that this is true, God shows us here on earth abundant miracles that occur continually about his body,[376] and all this was done to make us glad and cheerful in love.

[375] In his note, Fr John-Julian conjectures that Julian may have had in mind a system of credits similar to that under which a convict can accumulate 'good time' in order to secure an earlier release. Thus, someone's later sin does not wipe out their earlier merit.

[376] We should presumably take from this that frequent miracles occurring at the shrine of Saint John of Beverley were generally acknowledged in

CHAPTER 39

Of the sharpness of sin and the goodness of contrition, and how our kind Lord does not want us to despair because of our frequent falling

Sin is the sharpest scourge that any chosen soul may be flogged with. When whipped by this scourge, a man or woman is all but broken and made disgusting in their own sight, to the point that sometimes they think they are not worthy of anything, as it were, but sinking into Hell, until the touch of the Holy Spirit brings contrition and turns their bitterness to hope for God's mercy, and then begins to heal their wounds, and the soul, revived, returns to the life of Holy Church. The Holy Spirit leads them willingly to confession, to reveal their sins candidly and truthfully, and with great sorrow and great shame that they have befouled the fair image of God, and they undertake their penance for every sin, imposed by their confessor, as established in Holy Church by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. And this is one meekness that greatly pleases God, as does also meekly accepting bodily sickness of God's sending, and from outside, sorrow and shame,

---

Julian's day, and that she sees these miracles as evidence of God's love for Saint John, despite his having sinned.

together with the censure and contempt of the world, with all its grievances and trials that we are cast into, both spiritually and bodily.

[2] Most affectionately our good Lord takes care of us, when it seems to us that we are all but forsaken and cast away because of our sin, and because we think we deserve it. And because of the meekness that we get from this, by God's grace, we are raised right up high in his sight. And also, our Lord visits whom he wishes with a particular grace causing them such great contrition, together with compassion[377] and a true longing for God, that they are suddenly relieved of their sin and suffering and taken up into bliss, and even made equal with the saints.[378] Through contrition are we made pure. Through compassion are we made ready. And through longing for God are we made worthy. As I understand it, these are the three ways by which all souls come to Heaven, that is to say, those who have been sinners on earth, and shall be saved.

[377] i.e., compassion for Jesus. This sentence may refer to LT2 where Julian speaks of her own desire for the three wounds of contrition, compassion and longing for God.

[378] Julian is describing nonsacramental absolution from sin, when God directly absolves the penitent without requiring the Sacrament of Penance, formal confession, or any other intervention on the part of the Church.

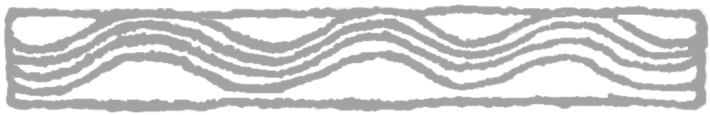
[3] For every sinful soul needs to be healed with these medicines.[379] Although healed, his wounds appear before God, not as wounds, but as signs of honour. Whereas on the one hand we are punished here with sorrow and with suffering, on the other, we shall be rewarded in Heaven by the benevolent love of our God Almighty, who wishes that none who come there should have their hardships wasted to any degree, for he considers sin to be sorrow and the cause of suffering to those who love him, to which, out of love, he assigns no blame.

[4] The reward that we shall receive shall not be little, but it shall be most glorious and honourable. And so shall all shame be turned to honour and joy. For our gracious Lord does not want his servants to despair for often falling or falling grievously, for our falling[380] does not hinder his loving us. Peace and love are ever in our essential nature and actions – but we do not always feel peace and love. But he wants us to take heed of this, that through love he is the ground of our whole life, and furthermore, that he is our everlasting protector, and vigorously defends us against all our enemies whose full wickedness and full cruelty bears upon us, and so much so is our need

[379] Translating *For by theyse medycins behovyth that every synfulle soule be helyd.*

[380] i.e., falling into sin.

all the greater because by our falling we give them grounds.[381]



[381] SLOANE has *him*, not *hem* – them, so possibly this passage should read, *... and so much so is our need all the greater because by our falling we give him grounds*, that is, give God grounds for defending us, rather than give our enemies grounds for treating us cruelly. See Warrack 2002, 81 fn. This sentence is picked up again at LT78.1.

CHAPTER 40

We should long for love with Jesus and shun sin for that love, the vileness of sin surpasses all suffering, and God loves us most tenderly while we dwell in sin, and so should we also love our neighbour

And this is the supreme friendship of our courteous Lord,[382] that he cares for us so tenderly while we remain sinful. And furthermore, he touches us most secretly, and shows us our sin by the sweet light of mercy and grace.[383] But when we see ourselves so foul, we think that God must be angry with us for our sin. Then are we stirred by the Holy Spirit through contrition into prayer and the desire to make amends with all our might so as to slake God's anger until the time we find rest for our soul and comfort for our conscience.

---

[382] For God's courteousness see LT7.4/6, 8.5, 10.10, 22.2, 23.2, 26.1, 43.3, 51.1, 53.1, 58.4, 64.2/5, 66.3, 67.2, 74.4, 76.4, 77.6, 78.3, 79.2/3, 82.1, 85.1; ST3.4, 6.1, 7.2, 12.3, 13.5, 21.4. On friendship see LT49.3, 76.3/4. See Jn 15:15, 'I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father' (NRSV).

[383] Julian is alluding to the *examen*, or spiritual self-review, by which in meditation or prayer, one asks God to reveal one's sins in order to then confess them.

And then we hope that God has forgiven us our sin. And it is true. And our courteous Lord then shows himself to the soul, cheerfully, with a most joyful countenance, with the most friendly welcome, as if the soul had been in pain and in prison, saying this, 'My dear darling, I am glad you have come to me in all your woe. I have always been with you, and now you see how I love you, and how we are united in bliss.' Thus are sins forgiven by grace and mercy, and our soul honourably received with joy, just as it shall be when it comes to Heaven, as often as it comes by the gracious working of the Holy Spirit and the power of Christ's Passion.

[2] Here I truly understood that all manner of thing is made ready for us by the supreme goodness of God, so much so that when we are ourselves living in peace and love,[384] we are truly safe. But because we may not have this in fullness while we are here, we therefore need always to live with our Lord Jesus in sweet prayer and in loving longing, for he longs always to bring us to the fullness of joy, as it was said earlier when he showed his spiritual thirst.[385]

[3] But now, if, because of all this spiritual comfort that has been spoken of, any man or woman should be moved by folly to say or to think, 'If this is

[384] Translating *charyte*.

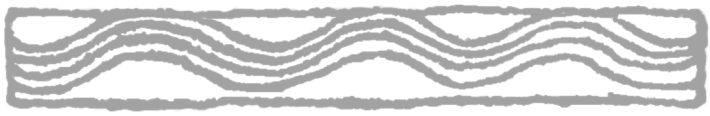
[385] In LT31.2–5.

true, then it would be good to sin, in order to gain a greater reward,' or else to discount sin, beware of this inclination, for truly, if it comes, it is false and comes from the Enemy;[386] because the same true love that touches us all with his blessed comfort, is the same blessed love that teaches us that we should hate sin only for the sake of love. And through my own feeling, I am sure that the more each kind soul sees this in the gracious love of our Lord God, the more loath he is to sin, and the more he is ashamed. For if all the sufferings in Hell and of purgatory and on earth (death and all the others),were laid out before us, set against sin, we would rather choose all that suffering than sin, for sin is so vile and so greatly to be hated that it cannot be compared to any suffering, if that suffering is not sin itself. And I was shown no harder Hell than sin, for a kind soul hates no suffering but sin. For all is good but sin, and nothing is evil but sin.

[4] And when we give our intent to love and meekness, through the working of mercy and grace, we are made all fair and pure. And as powerful and wise as God is to save mankind, so is he willing. For Christ himself is the ground of all the laws of

[386] See Rom 6:1–2, 'What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?' (NIV).

Christian men, and he taught us to do good in return for evil. Here we may see that he is himself this love,[387] and does to us what he teaches us to do [to others],[388] for he wants us to be like him in the wholeness of endless love for ourselves and for all our fellow Christians. Just as his love for us is not broken because of our sin, he does not wish that our love for ourselves and for our fellow Christians be broken. Instead, we must unreservedly hate sin and endlessly love the soul, as God loves it. Then would we hate sin just as God hates it, and love the soul as God loves it. For in these words that God spoke is an endless comfort, 'I keep you completely safe.'[389]



[387] Translating *charite*.

[388] See Matt 7:12, 'So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets' (NIV).

[389] Translating *I kepe the fulle truly*. SLOANE has *I kepe the sekirly* (securely).

CHAPTER 41

THE FOURTEENTH REVELATION, *as was said before, that it is impossible we should pray for mercy yet not receive it, and how God wants us always to pray even though we are dry and barren, for such prayer is acceptable and pleasing to him*

After this, our Lord explained about prayer, in which Showing I saw two aspects of our Lord's meaning. One is rightful prayer, the other is certain trust. Yet often, our trust is not complete, because we are not sure that God hears us on account, as we think it, of our lack of merit and because we feel so worthless. For we are often as barren and dry after our prayers as we were before, and thus it feels to us that our folly[390] is the cause of our weakness, for I have felt this myself.

[2] And all this our Lord brought suddenly to my mind, showing and speaking these words, // 'I am the ground of your beseeching. First, it is my wish that you should have something, next I make you wish it, and then I make you beseech me for it, and you do beseech me for it. So how could it then be that you should not have what you beseech of me?' //

[390] *foly* for Julian had more of an emphasis of sinfulness than it has for us.

And thus in this first statement,[391] with the three that follow,[392] our good Lord reveals a great consolation, as may be seen in those very words.

[3] And in the first statement, where he says, 'You beseech me,'[393] there he reveals the greatest pleasure and endless reward that he will give us for our beseeching. And in the sixth statement[394] where he says, 'So how could it then be,' this is said as an impossible thing, for it is quite impossible that maybe we should pray for mercy and grace and not have them, for all things that our good Lord makes

[391] Translating *reson*, reason as in what accounts for or explains something.

[392] i.e., that is the 'three' that she has just been presented with, above: the 'first statement' is 'God wishes that you have something'; the second statement is 'God makes you wish for it'; the third is 'God makes you beseech him for it'; and the fourth is 'You do beseech God for it.'

[393] This is in fact the *fourth* statement in the enumeration in LT42.2, above. Scribes have got confused about how best to enumerate these statements.

[394] The double slashes // in LT41.2, above, mark text in PARIS that is written in red ink. In this text, there are *six* statements, all of which are spoken by God (indeed, throughout PARIS, God's words are written in red ink). The six statements are:

(1) 'I am the ground of your beseeching.'
(2) 'God wishes that you have something';
(3) 'God makes you wish for it';
(4) 'God makes you beseech him for it';
(5) 'You do beseech God for it';
(6) 'So how could it then be, that you should not have what it is you beseech me for?'

us pray for, he has himself ordained for us since before the beginning. Here then may we see that it is not our beseeching that is the cause of the goodness and grace that he extends to us, but his own intrinsic goodness. And this he revealed beyond all doubt when he said with these sweet words, 'I am the ground.' And our good Lord wishes that this be known to all those on earth who love him, and the more that we know it, the more shall we pray, if we grasp it wisely, for so is our Lord's intention.

[4] Beseeching is a true and gracious enduring will of the soul, united and fastened to the will of our Lord by the sweet, inner working of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord himself is the chief receiver[395] of our prayers, as I see it, which he accepts most thankfully. And greatly rejoicing, he sends them up above and sets them in a treasure house where they shall never perish.[396] There they are before God, with all his holy saints, continually received, ever speeding our needs. And when we shall take up our bliss, they shall be

[395] A receiver is a government official appointed to collect rents or other money owing.

[396] Cf, Matt 6:19–21, 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (NRSV).

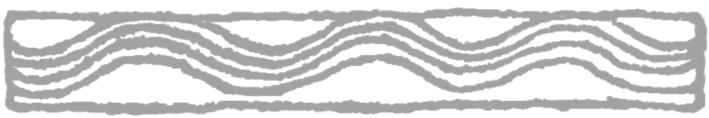
returned to us as part of our joy, with endless, honourable thanking from him.

[5] Most glad and joyful is our Lord on account of our prayers. He looks for them and he wishes to have them. For through his grace our praying makes us like himself in quality as we are like him in nature, and this is his blessed wish, for this is what he says, 'Pray wholeheartedly, inwardly, even though you think it does not appeal to you. Yet it is beneficial enough, even though you are not aware of it. Pray wholeheartedly inwardly, even though you are aware of nothing, even though you see nothing, even though you think you cannot pray. For in dryness and barrenness, in sickness and feebleness, then is your prayer most pleasant to me, even though you think it gives you but little pleasure, and so is the whole of your life prayer in my sight.'

[6] Because the reward and the endless thanks that he will give us, and because he longs for our praying continually in his sight, God accepts the good intention and exertion of his servants, however we feel, and thus it pleases him that we engage in prayer and in good living, with his help and his grace, reasonably and with discretion preserving our strength for him until in the fullness of joy we have him whom we seek, that is, Jesus. And this he

showed in the Fifteenth Revelation, where he said, 'You shall have me for your reward.'[397]

[7] Giving thanks is also part of prayer. Thanksgiving is a true, inner awareness, redirecting ourselves with great reverence and appropriate awe, and with all our strength to those tasks that our Lord stirred in us, rejoicing and thanking inwardly. And sometimes in its abundance, it breaks out in voice, saying, 'Good Lord, thank you! Blessed may you be!' And sometimes, when the heart is dry and feels nothing, or else when subjected to the temptations of our Enemy, then it is driven by reason and by grace to cry aloud to our Lord, calling on his blessed Passion and his great goodness. And so the power of our Lord's word turns[398] in upon the soul and quickens the heart, so that through his grace it enters upon its true work, and makes it pray most blessedly and truly to rejoice in our Lord. That is the most beautiful thanksgiving in his sight.



[397] LT64.2/5; ST20.2.

[398] 'Turn' in the sense of realign, transform.

CHAPTER 42

Of three things that belong to prayer, and how we should pray, and of the goodness of God who accepts our imperfection and feebleness when we do what is right

Our Lord wishes that we have true understanding, specifically of three things that belong to our prayers. The first is through whom and how our prayers come about.[399] Through whom, he shows when he says, 'I am the ground.' And how they come about, is through his goodness, for he says, 'First it is my wish.' The second thing, regarding in what manner and how we should perform our prayers, is that our will be joyfully transformed into the will of our Lord, and this is what he means when he says, 'I make you wish it.'[400] The third thing is that we should know the fruit and the end of our prayer, which is to be united with and be like our Lord in all things. And with this intention

[399] Julian believes that we are not the source of our own prayer, which has its origin in God's action *in us*. See Rom 8:26, 'Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words' (NRSV).
[400] Julian is referring to the words she heard God speak at LT41.2.

and for this end was all this lovely lesson shown.[401] And he will help us. And he shall make it so, as he said himself. Blessed may he be!

[2] For this is what our Lord wants, that our prayers and our trust be both equally abundant. For if we do not trust as much as we pray, we do not fully honour our Lord in our prayer, and we also hinder and hurt ourselves. And the cause of this is, as I believe, our not knowing truly that our Lord is the ground from whom our prayers spring. And also, that we do not know that they are given to us by the grace of his love. For if we knew this, it would make us trust that we could have all that we desire as a gift from our Lord. For I am sure that no man asks for mercy and grace with honest intent unless mercy and grace have already been given to him. But sometimes it comes into our minds that we have prayed for a long time, and yet, we think, we have not received what we asked for. But we should not on this account be dejected, for I am sure, through what our Lord intends to convey, that either we are to wait for a better time, for more grace, or for a better gift.

[3] He wants us to have a true understanding that he, himself, is Being. And in our knowing this, he

[401] At LT6.7, Julian refers to her Revelation as a 'lesson of love'. Here, she uses the expression 'lovely lesson', and at LT79.3, again, she uses the expression 'lovely lesson'.

wants our understanding to be grounded with all our strength and all our purpose and all our intention. And on this foundation[402] he wants us to take our place and make our dwelling, and through the light of grace that he gives us, he wants us to understand these following three things. The first is our noble and excellent creation. The second, our precious and most worthy redemption. The third, that he has made all things beneath us to be of service to us, and out of love for us he preserves them. His meaning then is this, as if he had said, 'Behold and see that I have done all this before you began to pray. And now, here you are, praying to me.' And thus he means that it is fitting for us to know that the greatest deeds have been done as Holy Church teaches.

[4] And in the beholding of this, with thanksgiving, we should pray for the deed that is now being done, and that is, [we should pray] that he rule us and guide us to his honour in this life, and bring us to his bliss, and for this he has done everything. This then is what he means, that we see that he does it, and we pray for it. For one of these on its own is not enough, for if we pray but do not see that he is doing it, it makes us dejected and doubtful, and that is not to his honour. And if we see

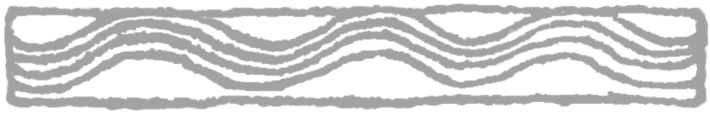
[402] Translating *grounde*.

that he is doing it, but do not pray, we fail in our obligation. And so it must not be like this, that is to say, this is not how God sees it. But to see that he is doing it, and immediately to pray for it, in such is he honoured and in such are we helped. It is his wish that we pray for everything that our Lord has ordained to occur, either specifically or in general. And the joy and bliss that shall come to him, and the thanks and the honour that shall come to us, as I see it, surpasses the understanding of all creatures in this life.

[5] For prayer is a true understanding of that fullness and joy that is to come, together with true longing and certain truth. Savouring or seeing our bliss that we are ordained to, naturally makes us long for it.[403] True understanding and love, with sweet remembrance of our Saviour, graciously makes us trust in it, and thus by nature we long, and through grace we trust. And our Lord continually watches as we engage in these two tasks,[404] for here lies our duty, and his goodness may assign us nothing less than what we are obligated diligently to perform.[405] And when we have done it, yet shall we think it is nothing, and in truth it is. But let us do as

[403] For this sentence SLOANE has: *The absence of that bliss that has been kindly prepared* [*kyndly ordeynid*] *for us, makes us long for it.*
[404] i.e., *werkynges* of longing and trust.
[405] Following Colledge and Walsh.

well as we may, and meekly ask for mercy and grace, and all that we find lacking in us we shall find in him. And this is what he means where he says, 'I am the ground of your beseeching.' And thus in these blessed words, along with the Showing, I saw all our weakness[406] and all our dreaded fears completely overcome.



[406] Following SLOANE, which has *wekenes*. PARIS has *wyckydnesse*.

CHAPTER 43

What prayer does when ordained by God's will, and how the goodness of God delights in the deeds that he does through us, as though he were beholden to us, working all things most sweetly

Prayer unites the soul to God,[407] yet though when it is restored by grace the soul is always like God in nature and in substance, it is often in a condition unlike God because of sin on man's part. Then is prayer a witness to the soul's wanting what God wants, and it comforts the conscience and enables man to receive grace. And thus God teaches us to pray, and steadfastly trust that we shall have what we pray for. For he regards us with love, and wants to make us partners in his good will and works. And therefore he moves us to pray for what it pleases him to do, for which prayers and good will that we have as his gifts he will reward us and give us unending recompense. And this was shown in these words, 'And you beseech it.'

[2] In these words, God showed such great pleasure and such great delight as if he were in debt to us for

[407] See 1 Cor 6:17, 'But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him' (NRSV).

each good deed that we do, even though it is he who does it, and because we beseech him vigorously to do those things that please him, it is as if he had said, 'How could you please me more than to beseech me vigorously, wisely and eagerly to do the things that I wish to have done?' And thus through prayer is the soul in accord with God.

[3] But when our courteous Lord through his special grace shows himself to our soul, we have what we desire, and then for the time being we do not see that there is anything more that we should pray for, but all our strength is set wholly upon contemplating him. And as I see it, this is an exalted, imperceptible prayer, for the whole point of our praying is to be fused to the vision and contemplation of him to whom we pray, wonderfully rejoicing with reverent awe and such great sweetness and delight in him that we cannot pray at all, but only as he moves us at any one time.[408]

[4] And well do I know that the more the soul sees God, the more she[409] desires him, through his grace. But when we do not see him in this way, we feel the

[408] Whilst gazing upon God, the soul's desire is fulfilled, leaving nothing further to be prayed for. And in the midst of this experience, the soul is so united to and focused upon God that it is unable to pray.

[409] 'Soul', *anima* in Latin is feminine, so Julian likewise in her own English writing accords the soul the feminine pronoun.

need and have cause to pray to Jesus on account of our failing and inability. For when the soul is tested and troubled and lost to herself in her distress, then it is time to pray, to make oneself obedient and submissive to God. But no manner of prayer can make God obedient to the soul, for God's love is always the same. And thus I saw that whenever we see the need to pray for something, then our good Lord follows us, relieving our longing. And when, through his special grace, we behold him plainly, seeing no other, then must we follow him, and he draws us to him through love. For I saw and felt that his wonderful and abundant goodness completes all our capacities.

[5] And thereupon I saw that his continual working in all manner of things so kindly, so wisely, and so effectively, surpasses our imaginings and all that we can express or think. And then we can do no more but behold him, and rejoice with a powerful, strong desire to be entirely united with him, and attending to his counsel and rejoicing in his love and delighting in his goodness.

[6] And thus we shall, through his sweet grace and our own meek, continual prayer, come into him now, in this life, by many secret touchings of sweet spiritual visions and feelings, measured out to us as our simplicity may bear it. And this is done and shall be done, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, until we

shall die, longing for love. And then we shall all come into our Lord, fully knowing ourselves,[410] possessing God in abundance. And immediately shall we all be sheltered in God, truly seeing and fully feeling him, hearing him spiritually, and delectably smelling and sweetly tasting him.[411] And there we shall see God face to face,[412] homely and abundantly. The creature that is made shall see and endlessly behold God who is the Maker. For no man may thus see God and continue to live, that is to say, in this mortal life,[413] but when, through his special grace, he wishes to show himself here, he strengthens the creature beyond its natural powers, and he measures out the Showing according to his own purpose and what will be beneficial at this time.

[This concludes the Fourteenth Showing. Detailed reflections feature in LT44–50. LT51 presents Lord and the Servant parable. Further reflections occur in LT52–63.The Fifteenth Showing is recounted in LT64–5, and the Sixteenth Showing occupies LT66–8.]

---

[410] Translating *oure selfe clerely knowyng*.

[411] Julian is shown that when we are at last safe and secure in God's presence, we will experience him with all five of our senses.

[412] See 1 Cor 13:12. 'For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known' (NRSV).

[413] See Ex 33:20, '[God] said, "You cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live."' (NRSV).

CHAPTER 44

Of the properties of the Trinity and how man's soul, a creature,[414] *has the same properties, doing what it was made for, seeing, beholding and marvelling his God so that it seems as nothing to the self*

Often in all the Revelations,[415] God showed that man at all times works his will, to his honour, continually and ceaselessly. And what this working is was shown in the First Revelation, shown in the marvellous example of truth and wisdom acting in the blessed soul of our Lady Saint Mary. And now I hope by the grace of the Holy Spirit to say what I saw.[416]

[2] Truth sees God, and wisdom comprehends God, and from these two come a third, and that is a wonderful delight in God, which is love.[417] When

[414] i.e., that which is made by God.

[415] Julian's account of the Fourteenth Showing concludes at the end of LT43. The phrase 'Often in all the Revelations' suggests that from here, Julian is now reflecting on the Showings (which resume after a lengthy interpolation of commentary in LT44–63) addressing a wide variety of topics, sometimes concerning specific Showings, sometimes offering a more general discussion; this includes the 'example' of the Lord and the Servant in LT51 which plays a prominent role in Julian's theology.

[416] In the sense of understand, comprehend.

[417] Here is an instance of Trinitarian analysis, which Julian frequently

truth and wisdom are truly present, there is love, truly coming from them both, and all of God's making. For God is supreme unending truth, supreme unending wisdom, supreme unending love, unmade.[418] And a man's soul is a creation of God, having the same properties, but made.[419] And evermore it does what it was made for: it sees God and contemplates God, and it loves God. For which reason God rejoices in the creature, and the creature in God, endlessly marvelling, in which marvelling he sees his God, his Lord, his Maker, so exalted, so great, and so good in comparison with himself who is made, that the creature scarcely seems anything to himself. But the brightness and clarity of truth and wisdom makes him see and know that he is made for love, in which love God endlessly keeps him.

---

brings to her *Showings*, in which God and his properties, his actions, aspects of the creation, and especially his creating human beings, can be understood in terms of the three persons of the Godhead: God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each having their own properties and capacities. These three persons have one identical essence or nature, and denote a single being to which Julian, in many places, refers to as the Godhead (at LT4.3, 8.2, 10.6, 12.2, 14.1, 20.1/2, 24.1, 29.2, 31.3, 51.18/20/21/23, 54.1, 55.4, 56.2, 60.4, 61.1, 68.1, 74.2; ST3.4, 5.3, 11.2, 13.1, 14.2, 22.1).

[418] Unlike his creation, which he makes, God is himself *not* – in turn – *made* by anything.

[419] Human souls have the same properties as the Holy Trinity, but being God's creation, are *made*, in contrast to God's being *unmade*, not created.

CHAPTER 45

Of the firm and deep judgement of God and the variable judgement of man

God judges us according to our natural substance,[420] which is always kept united in him, whole and safe without end. And this judgement proceeds from his righteousness.[421] And man judges himself by our changeable, sensual nature, which seems now one thing and now another, depending on which of its parts it draws from and shows outwardly. And this judgement is mixed, for sometimes it is good and gentle, sometimes it is harsh and hostile. And in as much as it is good and gentle, it belongs to divine righteousness. And in as much as it is harsh and hostile, our good Lord Jesus reforms it by mercy and grace through the power of his blessed Passion, and so brings it to righteousness. And though these two

[420] Translating *oure kyndely substance*. Julian here refers to the higher part of the soul. In Middle English, substance corresponds to the modern term essence – that is, what a thing is in its essential nature. Julian uses this expression to suggest that the true being of each soul remains eternally one with God.

[421] Translating *ryghtfulhede*, which Watson and Jenkins render 'justice'.

[judgements] are thus reconciled and united, yet they shall both be known in Heaven, without end.

[2] The first judgement is of God's righteousness, and this proceeds from his own sublime, endless love. And this is that fair, sweet judgement that was shown in the whole fair Revelation in which I saw him assign to us no manner of blame.[422] And though this was sweet and delectable, yet in my beholding it, it did not of itself fully comfort me. And this was because of the judgement of Holy Church, which I had understood previously and of which I had always been aware, and therefore according to this judgement I thought it necessary[423] that I acknowledge myself a sinner, and by the same judgement I understood that sinners will sometimes deserve blame and anger. But these two[424] I could not see in God. And therefore my longing to resolve this was more than I can or may tell, for God himself showed the higher judgement at the same time, and therefore we needs must accept it.[425] Yet the lower judgement was taught to me in earlier times by Holy

[422] *no manner of blame*, repeated from LT27.4, picks up the rhythm and vocabulary of *all manner of thing*, as Watson and Jenkins point out, and repeated again in LT39.3. See Rom 8:1, 'There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus' (NRSV).

[423] Translating *methought that me behovyth nedys*.

[424] i.e., blame and anger.

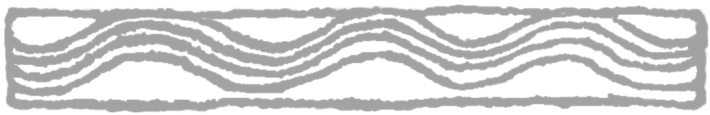
[425] Translating *therefore we behovyd nedys to take it*.

Church, and therefore I could in no way abandon that lower judgement.

[3] Then this was my desire, that I might see, through God, in what manner the judgement of Holy Church here on earth is true in his sight, and in what way it would be fitting for me to understand it, so that both judgements might be maintained in a way that would be honourable to God and right for me.[426] And to all this I received no other answer but a wonderful example of a Lord and his Servant, which I shall recount later,[427] and even that was obscure. And yet I retained the desire, and will until my life's end, to understand, by God's grace, how these two judgements applied to me. For all heavenly things and all earthly things that belong to Heaven are included in these two judgements. And the more knowledge and understanding, by the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit, that we have of these two judgements, the more shall we see and recognise our failings. And the more we see them, the more natural will it be, through grace, to long to be filled with unending joy and bliss, for this is what we are made for, and our natural substance is now blessed

[426] Julian is trying to reconcile what God showed her on the one hand – that he has no anger and does on blame us – with, on the other hand, the teaching of the Church – that she and everyone else are sinners deserving of blame and anger (see LT9.3).
[427] In LT51 (not present in ST).

in God, and has been since it was made, and shall be, without end.



CHAPTER 46

We cannot know ourselves in this life except by faith and grace, but we must know ourselves sinners, and how God is never angry, being most near the soul, preserving it

But in our passing lives that we have here, the sensual part of our soul does not know what we are in ourselves, except through our faith.[428] Yet when we know and see truly and clearly what our self is, then shall we truly and clearly see and know our Lord God in the fullness of joy. And therefore it needs be[429] that the nearer we are to our bliss the greater shall be our longing, both by nature and by grace. We may have knowledge of ourselves in this life through the continual help and strength of our higher nature, in which knowing we may increase and grow through the assistance and help of mercy and grace. But we may never fully know ourselves until that final moment,[430] at which point this passing life and all manner of woe and pain shall have an end. And therefore it belongs properly to us, both by nature and grace, to long and desire

[428] Following Watson and Jenkins. The sensual part of the soul is 'the only part of the soul to which everyday consciousness has access'.
[429] Translating *And therfore it behovyth nedys to be*.
[430] *last poynt*, final moment of life, at the point of death.

with all our strength to know ourselves in which complete knowing we shall truly and clearly know our God in the fullness of unending joy.

[2] And yet in all this time from the beginning [of the Showings] to the end, I had two kinds of perception. One was of an endless, continuing love, with the certainty of protection and blissful salvation, for this is what the whole of the Showings was about. And the other was the common teaching of Holy Church in which I was previously instructed and grounded, willingly living by it and understanding it. And my perception of this did not leave me, for the Showing did not move or lead me from it on any point, but through it I was taught to love it and like it, whereby I might, with the help of our Lord, and through his grace, grow and rise to a more heavenly knowledge and a higher love.

[3] And thus, in all I beheld, I thought it necessary that we see and know[431] that we are sinners and do many evils that we ought to leave undone, and leave undone many good deeds that we ought to do, for which we deserve punishment, blame and anger. And despite all this, I saw truly that our Lord was never angry nor ever shall be, for he is God, he is Good, he is Truth, he is Love, he is Peace, and his

[431] Translating *me behovyd nedys to take it.*

power, his wisdom, his love,[432] and his unity[433] will not let him be angry.[434] For I saw truly that it is contrary to the nature of his power to be angry, and against the nature of his wisdom, and against the nature of his goodness. God is that goodness which cannot be angry, for God is nothing but goodness. Our soul is united to him in unchangeable goodness. And between God and our soul is neither anger nor forgiveness in his sight. For of his own goodness our soul is so completely united to him, that between God and our soul there is absolutely nothing.[435]

[4] In every Showing, the soul was led by love and drawn by strength to this understanding. In his great goodness our good Lord showed truly that this is so, and how it is so. And he wants us to desire to know it, that is to say, to the extent that it is proper for his creature to know it. For everything that this simple soul understood, God wanted it shown and known, but he himself, out of love, vigorously and wisely

[432] Translating *charyte*.

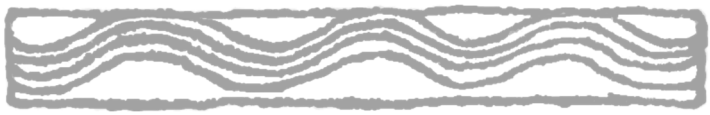
[433] These are the four qualities that define God as Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and Godhead.

[434] The view that God cannot be angry with us is developed across the next few chapters, to the end of LT49. Julian discusses anger (translating *wrath/wroth*) at several places in the *Showings*: LT13.3, 40.1, 45.2, 46.3, 47.1, 48.1/4, 49.2–5.

[435] Julian is embracing a thoroughgoing mysticism in which God and the human soul share the same identity. As much as we are God, God is also us.

conceals those things that he wishes to keep secret. For I saw in the same Showing that many mysteries are hidden[436] which may never be known until such time that God, in his goodness, has made us worthy to see them. And with this I was well satisfied, awaiting our Lord's will in this exalted marvel.

[5] And now I submit to my mother, Holy Church, as a simple child ought to do.[437]



[436] See LT34.1.

[437] On the Church as mother, see LT60–2. This final sentence seems oddly ill at ease here. It has come completely adrift from the narrative coming before, and has the appearance of a throwaway remark. It may well have been added at a later date by a scribe concerned that Julian's writings are straying uncomfortably close to a radical or even heretical position.

CHAPTER 47

We must reverently marvel and meekly suffer, ever rejoicing in God, and how our blindness in our not seeing God is the cause of sin

Our soul is engaged upon two binding objectives. One is that we reverently wonder, the other is that we meekly suffer, always rejoicing in God. For he wants us to know that in a short time[438] we shall see clearly in him all that we desire. Yet in spite of all this, I turned my thoughts to earnestly wonder what the mercy and forgiveness of God are, for by the teaching that I already had, I understood that the mercy of God shall be the remission of his anger following those occasions when we sin. For, I thought, to a soul whose intention and desire is to love, the anger of God would be more harsh than any other punishment. And therefore I took it that the remission of his anger would be one of the main features of his mercy. Yet despite my looking and longing, I could not see this feature anywhere in all the Showing, but what I saw and understood of the

[438] She is presumably speaking of death.

workings of mercy I shall speak of in some measure, as God will give me grace.

[2] I understood this. Man is changeable in this life, and through naivety and ignorance falls into sin.[439] He is weak and foolish in himself, and also his will is overwhelmed in these times as he suffers turmoil and sorrow and misery. And the cause of this is blindness, for he does not see God. For if he saw God continually he would have no malicious feelings, nor any kind of stirring, no distress that encourages sin.

[3] This I saw and felt at the same time. And I thought that the sight and the feeling were exalted and abundant and gracious in comparison with what our usual experience is in this life, but yet I thought it but inferior and trivial when compared to the great longing that the soul has to see God. For I felt in me five kinds of emotion, which are these; rejoicing, mourning, desire, fear and certain hope. Rejoicing, because God gave me knowing and understanding that it really was he that I saw. Mourning, because of my failings. Desire, that I might see him ever more and more, understanding and knowing that we shall never be able to fully rest until we actually see him clearly in Heaven. Fear,

[439] Sin is not then the product of malicious intent, but results from our innate changeability, naivety and ignorance.

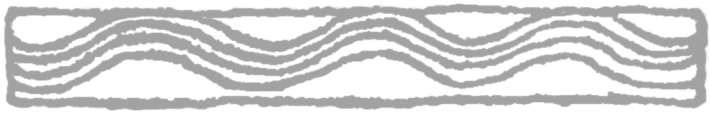
that it seemed to me for all that time that the vision would end, and that I would be left on my own. Certain hope was in the unending love that I saw, that I would be protected by his mercy and brought into his bliss.[440]

[4] And rejoicing in his sight, with this certain hope of his merciful protection produced in me understanding and comfort so that my mourning and fear were not so greatly painful. And yet in all this I understood from this Showing of God that this way of seeing him cannot, in this life, be continuous, and that this is so for his own honour and to increase our unending joy. And therefore we often fail to see him, and we immediately fall back upon ourselves, and then we find that we feel absolutely nothing but the waywardness that is in us, that has grown from the old root of our first sin[441] and from all those other

[440] i.e., in Heaven.

[441] This is Adam's original sin committed in the Garden of Eden at the dawn of time, in which the whole of humanity now shares. See Rom 5:12–19, 'Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned – To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus

sins of our own contriving that followed, and by this we are tormented and tested within the presence of sin and of suffering in many different ways, spiritual and bodily, as is familiar to us in this life.



Christ, overflow to the many! Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgement followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous,' (NIV) and 1 Cor 15:22, 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive' (NIV).

CHAPTER 48

Of mercy and grace and their properties and how we shall rejoice that always we suffered woe patiently

But our good Lord the Holy Spirit, who is unending life, dwelling in our soul,[442] keeps us safe, and fashions there a peace and through grace brings it comfort, and makes it obedient, and reconciles it to God. And this is the mercy and the way in which our good Lord continually leads us, for as long as we are in this changeable life. For I saw no anger, except on man's part, and that he forgives in us. For anger is nothing else but a rebelliousness and an opposition to peace and to love. And either it comes from lack of strength or lack of wisdom or lack of goodness, which are not lacking in God, but on our part. For through sin and wretchedness we have in us an anger and a persistent opposition to peace and to love. And this he showed very often in his loving expression of compassion and pity.[443]

---

[442] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

[443] For God regarding us with compassion and pity, see LT28.2 and LT71.4.

[2] For the basis[444] of mercy is love, and mercy acts to preserve us in love. And this was shown in such a manner that I could not perceive any quality of mercy other than as it were, love and love alone. That is to say, as I see it, mercy is a sweet, gracious working of love, blended with abundant pity. For mercy works to keep us safe. And mercy works for us, making all things good. Out of love, mercy lets us fail in some measure, and in as much as we fail, by so much do we fall, as in as much as we fall, by so much do we die. For it needs must be that we die,[445] in as much as we fail to see and understand God, who is our life. Our failing is full of fear, our falling is full of shame, and our dying is full of sorrow.

[3] Yet in all this, the sweet gaze of pity and love is never turned away from us, nor does the working of mercy ever cease, for I beheld the property of mercy and I beheld the property of grace, which have two ways of working in one love. Mercy possesses that quality of compassion that belongs to the tender love of motherhood.[446] And grace possesses that quality of esteem that belongs to the royal Lord who rules with the same love. Mercy works, protecting, tolerating, sustaining and healing, all through the

[444] Translating *ground*.

[445] Translating *For us behovyth nedys to die*.

[446] Julian introduces the idea of God as Mother. This is a significant theme of the *Showings*. See LT58–63.

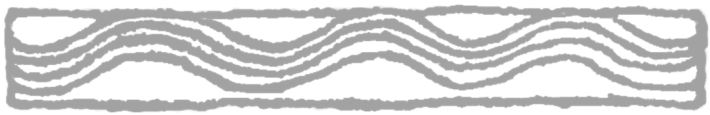
tenderness of love. And grace works with mercy, raising, rewarding, endlessly exceeding what our love and our exertions deserve, spreading abroad and revealing the sublime, abundant generosity of God's royal lordship through his wonderful courtesy. And this comes from an abundance of love, for grace transforms our frightful failing into abundant, unending solace. And grace transforms our shameful falling into the most honourable rising. And grace transforms our sorrowful dying into holy, blessed life.

[4] For I saw most truly that just as our waywardness brings upon us here on earth suffering, shame and sorrow, so, on the other hand, in Heaven grace brings us solace, honour and bliss in such abundance that when we come up and receive that sweet reward[447] that grace has prepared for us there, we shall thank and bless our Lord, endlessly rejoicing that ever we suffered sorrow. And that shall be on account of an aspect of that blessed love that we shall know in God, and which we might never have known without suffering that earlier sorrow. And when I saw all this I had to grant[448] that it is *our*

[447] In the sense of an award that is merited, or even in the sense of recompense.

[448] Translating *behovyd nedys to grant*.

anger that is diminished and dispelled by God's mercy and forgiveness.



CHAPTER 49

Our life is grounded in love without which we perish, yet God is never angry. But in our anger and sin he mercifully preserves us and brings peace to us, rewarding our tribulations

For it was a great marvel to the soul which was continually shown in all [the Showings] and with great diligence attended to, that our Lord God, with respect to himself, cannot forgive because he cannot be angry.[449] That would be impossible. For this was shown, that our life is all grounded and rooted in love,[450] and without love we cannot live. And therefore to the soul that through his special grace sees so much of the exalted, wonderful goodness of God, and sees that we are endlessly united to him in love, it is the greatest impossibility that can be, that God could be angry.

---

[449] If God does not blame us for sin, neither can he be angry on account of our sin, so he cannot forgive with the objective of mitigating an anger that is not present.

[450] See Eph 3:16–17, 'I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love' (NRSV).

[2] For anger and friendship are two opposites. For of him who dispels and destroys our anger and makes us gentle and kind, we needs must believe that he is always one in love,[451] and is himself gentle and kind, which is the opposite of anger. For I saw most certainly that where our Lord appears[452] peace[453] takes hold, and anger has no lodging. For I saw no manner of anger in God, neither for a short time nor for a long time. For truly, as it seems to me, if God could be angry, even for a moment, we would have neither life nor dwelling nor being. For as truly as we have our being from the endless power of God, and from the endless wisdom, and from the endless goodness, so truly are we kept safe in the endless power of God, in the endless wisdom and in the endless goodness. For though we feel in us anger, contention and strife, yet we are all mercifully enclosed in the kindness of God, and in his gentleness, in his benevolence and in his graciousness.

---

[451] Translating *it behovyth nedys to be that he be evyr in one love.*

[452] i.e., in these Showings.

[453] See Jn 20:19 and 26, 'When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."' (NRSV).

[3] For I saw most certainly that all our endless friendship, our home, our life and our being are in God, for the same unending goodness that keeps us safe when we sin, so that we do not perish, that same unending goodness continually nurtures a peace in us that counters our anger and our wayward falling, and makes us see, with a true dread, our need to vigorously seek God for forgiveness, with a grace-given longing for our salvation. For we may not be blessedly saved until we are truly in a state of peace and love, for *that* is our salvation.

[4] For though, because of the anger and waywardness that are in us, we now suffer tribulations, distress and misery as we fall victim to our blindness and our frailty, all the same, we are kept secure and safe through the mercy of God, so that we do not perish. But we are not blissfully safe in the having of our unending joy until we are filled with peace and love, that is to say, until we are completely content with God and all his works, and with all his judgements, and loving and peaceful in ourselves, and towards our fellow Christians and towards all that God loves, as it pleases love. And God's goodness does this in us. Thus I saw that God is

our true peace,[454] and he is our steadfast protector when we ourselves are not at peace. And he continually works to bring us into unending peace. And thus, when by the working of mercy and grace we are made gentle and kind, then will we be completely safe.

[5] The soul is immediately united with God when it truly finds peace within, for in him no anger is found. And thus I saw that when we are filled with peace and love we shall find no waywardness, nor shall we be hindered in any way by that waywardness which is in us now. Our Lord God, in his goodness, makes this waywardness wholly beneficial to us, for it is the cause of all our tribulations and all our misery. And these our Lord Jesus takes from us and sends them up to Heaven, where they are made more sweet and delectable than heart may think or tongue can tell. And when we come there, we shall find them ready, turned all to great splendour and endless honour. Thus is God our steadfast foundation,[455] and he shall be our whole joy, and make us as unchangeable as he is himself, when we are there.

[454] See Jn 14:27, 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid' (NRSV).
[455] Translating *ground*.

CHAPTER 50

How the chosen soul was never dead in the sight of God, and of a marvel upon the same, and three things she[456] *boldly asked for understanding from God*

And in this mortal life, mercy and forgiveness show our way that unceasingly leads us to grace. And through the turmoils and sorrows that we fall into on our part, we are often dead according to man's judgement here on earth. But in the sight of God, the soul that shall be saved was never dead, nor ever shall be.[457] Even so, I wondered and marvelled at this with all the diligence of my soul, to this effect: 'Good Lord, I see that you are truth itself, and I certainly know that we sin grievously every day,[458] and are most blameworthy. But I may neither abandon my

[456] i.e., the soul, which is feminine.

[457] See Wis 3:1–3, 'But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace' (NRSV).

[458] Possibly an allusion to Prov 24:16, 'For a just man shall fall seven times in the day, and shall rise again; but wicked men shall fall into evil' (WYCLIFF); subsequent translations dropped the phrase 'in the day', but Julian would have heard Wycliff's version.

knowing this truth nor do I see in these Showings your blaming us in any way. How can this be?'

[2] For I knew through the common teachings of Holy Church and by my own understanding, that the blame for our sins continually weighs upon us from the first man[459] until the time when we rise up into Heaven. This then is what amazed me, that I saw our Lord God extends to us no more blame than if we were as pure and as holy as the angels in Heaven. And my reason's blindness respecting these two contrary points troubled me greatly, and I could not rest for fear that his blessed presence should pass from my sight, and that I would be left in ignorance as to how he regards us in our sin. For either I needed to see that God has done away with all sin, or else I needed to see how God sees it[460], by which I might truly understand how I, in turn, ought to regard sin and what manner of blame is ours.

[3] My longing endured as I continued to gaze upon him,[461] yet I could not be patient, for a great fear and perplexity led me to think that 'If I take it thus, that we are not sinners nor ever blameworthy,

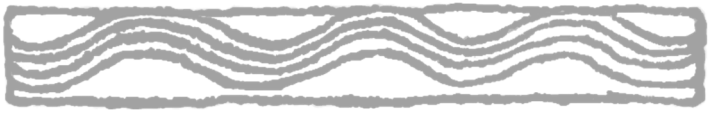
[459] i.e., Adam.

[460] Translating *For eithyr me behovyd to se in God that synne were alle done awey, or els me behovyd to see in God how he seeth it.*

[461] We should recall that throughout the entire course of the Showings, Julian has been gazing steadily upon the face of the crucified image of Christ. However, at this point Julian is reflecting on the Showings.

it seemed as if I could fall into heresy,[462] and fail to recognise the truth about sin. But if it is true that we *are* sinners, and worthy of blame, good Lord, how can it then be that I cannot see this truth in you, who are my God, my Maker, in whom I long to see all truth?'

[4] I presumed to ask this on the basis of three points. First, it is so modest a thing. For if it were something important, I would be afraid. Secondly, it is so ordinary. For if it were special and secret, again, I would be afraid. And thirdly, it seems to me that I need to understand this, if I am to live here,[463] in order to recognise good and evil, by which I may through reason and grace separate them more clearly, and love goodness and hate evil, as Holy Church teaches. I cried inwardly with all my might, seeking God's help, saying this, 'Ah, Lord Jesus, king of bliss, how shall I be reassured? Who shall tell me and teach me what I need to know if I cannot at this time see it in you?'



[462] Translating *err*. Interpreting this to mean (more specifically) 'heresy' is suggested by Watson and Jenkins.

[463] Fr John-Julian wonders whether Julian means to designate her anchorhold specifically, rather than the world at large.

CHAPTER 51

The answer to her earlier doubt through a marvellous example of a Lord and a Servant, and how God wishes to be waited for, for it was twenty years later before she fully understood this example, and how it is understood that Christ sits on the right hand of the Father

And then our courteous Lord answered most mystically by showing a wonderful example[464] of a Lord who has a Servant, and gave me insight into my understanding of who they both were. The Showing manifested on two different levels with respect to the Lord, and the Showing manifested on two different levels[465] with respect to the Servant. On one level it was shown spiritually but in bodily likeness, and on the other level it was shown more spiritually but without bodily likeness.[466] Regarding the first, I saw two persons in

[464] Retaining Julian's expression (from the Latin *exemplum*) which was the term typically used to denote illustrations deployed in writings and sermons at this time. An author today may prefer an alternative, such as exegesis, analogy, metaphor, simile, illustration, allegory, parable, exposition.

[465] Following Watson and Jenkins. That is, the allegory can be interpreted in two different ways, or functions on two different levels.

[466] She is distinguishing between her insights coming to her in the form of appearances of bodies, or people, doing things and experiencing things

bodily likeness, that is to say, a Lord and a Servant. And through this, God gave me spiritual understanding. The Lord sits[467] resting solemnly and at peace. The Servant stands before his Lord, respectfully ready to do his Lord's bidding. The Lord looks upon his Servant most lovingly and sweetly, and gently he sends him to a certain place to do his bidding. The Servant doesn't just go, but suddenly jumps up and runs in great haste, out of love to do his Lord's bidding. But immediately he falls into a ditch[468] and is badly injured, and there he groans and moans and wallows and writhes, unable to get up or help himself in any way.

[2] And in all this, the greatest distress that I saw him suffer lay in the loss of reassurance, for he could not turn his face to look upon his loving Lord,[469] who was very close to him, in whom is found full

---

(as in waking life, or in dreams) on the one hand, and on the other, having direct apprehension spontaneously arise in her thoughts.

[467] The momentary shift to the present tense is a deliberate rhetorical device, which takes the reader directly into the immediacy of the Showing.

[468] Translating *slade*. The ditch represents the world following the fall of humanity, but also the womb of the Virgin, where God becomes human as Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, and through the Incarnation was able to experience this fallen world and our experience of the human condition.

[469] See Ps 143:7, 'Answer me quickly, O Lord; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me, or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit' (NRSV).

reassurance. But like a man who was completely weak and foolish for the moment, he paid attention to his pain and the misery he endured, in which misery he suffered seven grievous torments. The first was the sore bruising that he received in his fall, which caused him much pain. The second was the heaviness of his body. The third was a weakness that followed from these two. The fourth was that he was blinded in his reason and stunned in his mind to such a degree that he had almost forgotten his own love. The fifth was that he could not get up. The sixth torment was the most astonishing to me, that he lay alone. I looked and gazed about, and neither far nor near, high nor low could I see any help come to him. The seventh was that the place in which he lay was deep, harsh and oppressive.

[3] I marvelled how this Servant could suffer all this misery with such humility, and I paid close attention to see if I could perceive in him any fault, or if the Lord should assign to him any manner of blame. And in truth, there were none to be seen, for only his good will and his great longing[470] was the cause of his falling. And he was as willing and as good inwardly as he was when he stood before his Lord, ready to do his bidding.

[4] And thus does his loving Lord continually

[470] i.e., his great longing to please his Lord.

regard him, most tenderly, and now with a twofold aspect, one outward, most gently and kindly, with great compassion and pity (and this was the first aspect); the other aspect was inward and more spiritual, and this was shown by leading my understanding towards the Lord, where I saw how much he rejoices on account of the honourable rest and dignity that through his abundant grace he desired to bring, and shall bring, to his Servant. This relates to the other level of the Showing. And now my understanding took me back to the first, keeping both in mind.

[5] Then this kind Lord said this to explain his meaning, 'Behold my beloved Servant,[471] see what harm and trouble he has suffered in my service, for love of me, and yes, for his good will. Is it not reasonable that I reward him for his fear and his dread, for his vexations and his injury and all his misery? And not only this, but ought I not give him a gift that is better for him and more honourable than his own health would have been?[472] If I did otherwise, it seems to me that I would be showing him a discourtesy.' And in this, an inward, spiritual Showing of the Lord's intention descended into my

[471] This alludes to Is 42:1. 'Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight' (NIV).

[472] i.e., better for him than if he had not been injured in the first place.

soul in which I saw that, considering his great goodness and his own honour, it must necessarily be[473] that his most dear Servant whom he loved so much should be fully and blissfully rewarded without end, above what he would have been if he had not fallen. Yes, and to such an extent that his falling and all his misery that came to him because of it shall be transformed into supreme, surpassing honour and unending bliss.

[6] And at this point the showing of the example vanished, and our good Lord guided my understanding in seeing what was shown in the Revelation to its end. But despite all this guidance, the sense of wonder that provoked the example[474] never left me, for I thought it was given to me in answer to my longing, and yet at that time I could not arrive at a full understanding that satisfied me. For in the Servant, who was shown to represent Adam, as I shall say, I saw many different properties that could in no way be attributed to Adam alone.

[7] And so at that time I relied greatly on three insights, for a full understanding of this wonderful example was not given to me at this time, in which mysterious example the secrets of the Revelation are

[473] Translating *it behovyth nedys to be*.

[474] The example of the Lord and the Servant appears not to feature within the original sixteen Showings of May 1373; more likely, it is an insight that came years later when reflecting on the Showings.

still very much hidden, although I saw and understood that every Showing is full of secrets. And therefore I must now tell[475] of three properties through which I am somewhat comforted. The first is the beginning of the teaching that I understood from it at that time. The second is the inner teaching that I have taken from it since. The third is the whole of the Revelation from beginning to end, which our Lord God in his goodness often brings freely to my mind's eye. And these three be so united that I cannot or may not separate them in my understanding. And through these three, united as one, I was taught how I ought to believe and trust in our Lord God, that from the same goodness that he showed this and for the same end, so also from the same goodness and for the same end he shall explain the vision to us when it is his wish.[476]

[8] For twenty years after the time of the Showing save three months, I received an inner teaching,[477] as I shall now say. 'You must take heed of all the properties and conditions that were shown in the example, though you may think them mysterious and meaningless in your view.' I assented willingly with great longing, looking inwardly with close

[475] Translating *And therefore me behovyth now to telle.*

[476] Alluding to the Great Deed in LT32.3–5, 36.3–4/6.

[477] Thus, knowing that the Showings were given to Julian in May 1373, we can date this 'inner teaching' of this parable to February 1393.

attention at all the details and properties that were shown at that time,[478] as far as my wit and my understanding will serve. I began by looking at the Lord and the Servant, at the way the Lord was sitting, and the place where he sat, and at the colour of his clothing, and how it was styled, and at his outward appearance, and his nobility, and at his goodness within. And I looked at the way the Servant was standing, and where and how, and at *his* clothes, at their colour and style, and at his outward behaviour, and at his inner goodness, and at his innocence. The Lord who sat solemnly in state, at rest and at peace, I understood to be God. The Servant who stood before him, I understood that he represented Adam, that is to say, that at that time I was shown one man and his falling by which I was to understand how God regards all men and their falling, for in God's sight, all men are one man, and one man is all men.[479]

[9] This man's strength was broken, and made most feeble, and he was stunned in his

[478] i.e. at the time of the earlier Showing, roughly twenty years earlier. SLOANE opens this paragraph with 'fifteen years save three months', and PARIS later revises the figure at LT86.2 to *fifteen yere after and mor*, in agreement with SLOANE. (PARIS LT51.8 contains the anomalous reading.)

[479] See Rom 5:19, 'For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous' (NRSV).

understanding, for he had been prevented from gazing upon his Lord. But his purpose[480] was preserved whole in God's sight, for I saw our Lord commend and approve his purpose, but he was himself hindered in and blinded to knowing this purpose. And this is to him a great sorrow and terrible anguish, for he neither sees his loving Lord clearly, who is to him most gentle and kind, nor does he see truly how he is himself regarded by his loving Lord. And I am quite certain that when these two things[481] are wisely and properly understood, we shall find rest and peace, in part, here [on earth], and the fullness of bliss in Heaven, through his abundant grace. And so begins the teaching that I had at that same time, through which I would come to know in what way he regards us in our sin. And then I saw that only suffering blames and punishes, and our kind Lord comforts and helps, and he is always kindly disposed to the soul, loving and longing to bring us to his bliss.

[10] The place where the Lord sat was simply on the earth, barren and empty, alone in the wilderness. His clothing was generously cut, long, and most splendid, as befits a Lord. The colour of his clothes was blue, like azure, most dignified and handsome.

---

[480] Translating *wylle*, following Spearing.

[481] i.e., *his loving Lord* and *how he is himself regarded*.

His countenance was merciful, his face was pale brown and had the most handsome features, his eyes were black, most beautiful and attractive, full of loving compassion, and within him was a high citadel, long and broad, all full of endless Heavens.[482] And the loving gaze in which he continually held his Servant, especially when he fell, I thought might melt our hearts with love and break them in two with joy. And this loving gaze showed a pleasing mixture which was wonderful to behold. One was compassion and pity, the other joy and bliss. The joy and bliss surpass the compassion and pity as far as Heaven is above the earth. The pity was earthly and the bliss was heavenly.

[11] The compassion and the pity of the Father were for the fall of Adam, who is his most loved creature. The joy and the bliss were for his most worthy Son, who is equal with the Father. The merciful gaze of his loving countenance filled all the earth and descended down with Adam into Hell, and through his continuing pity, Adam was kept from unending death. And this mercy and pity dwells with mankind until the time that we come up into Heaven. But man is blinded in this life, and therefore we cannot see our Father God as he is. And

[482] See LT24.1, where Jesus shows the same refuge, lodged within his wounded side.

when, out of his goodness, the time comes that he will show himself to man, he will show himself in a familar[483] way, as a man. Nevertheless, I saw truly that we ought to know and believe that the Father is not a man.[484]

[12] But his sitting on the barren and empty earth means this: he made man's soul to be his own city and dwelling-place,[485] which of all his works is the most pleasing. But once man had fallen into sorrow and suffering, he was no longer fit to serve that noble purpose. And therefore our kind Father, not wishing to prepare any other place for himself, sat upon the earth waiting for mankind, who is mixed with earth,[486] until that time, through his grace, his most dear Son had returned his city to its noble beauty through his bitter suffering.

---

[483] Translating *homely*.

[484] Julian would have been familiar with the standard iconography of her time, whereby the Holy Trinity was depicted showing God the Father as an old, bearded man, holding before him the crucified Jesus, with the Holy Spirit hovering overhead in the form of a dove. She wishes to emphasise for her reader that God is in fact not a man.

[485] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the Showings. See also LT48.1, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

[486] See Gen 2:7, ' – then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being' (NRSV).

This painting of the Holy Trinity was made at the end of the fifteenth century by an unknown artist and is currently in the National Museum in Warsaw. God the father is the central figure wearing a crown and standing behind God the Son, who is kneeling and showing the wound in this side, whilst flying over him in the form of a dove is the Holy Spirit. (A public domain image from Wikimedia Commons.)

[13] The blue of his clothing betokens his steadfastness. The brownness of his lovely face, together with the attractive blackness of his eyes, was most appropriate for signifying his holy solemnity. The ampleness of his fine clothing, which was shining all over, betokens that he has enclosed in himself all Heaven and all unending joy and bliss. And this was shown in an instant[487] in which my understanding was led into the Lord, in which I saw him greatly rejoicing for the glorious restoration which through his abundant grace he wishes to bring, and shall bring, to his Servant.

[14] And still I marvelled, contemplating the Lord and the Servant. As I said before, I saw the Lord sitting in solemn state, and the Servant standing reverently before his Lord, and in this Servant there is a double meaning, one outward, and the other inward. Outwardly, he was dressed simply, as a labourer who was ready for work, and he stood very close to the Lord, not right in front of him, but just to one side, on the left. His clothing was a white tunic, unlined, old, and all begrimed and stained with the sweat of his body, tight-fitting and short, coming to just a hand's breadth below the knee,

[487] Translating *touche*, touch, used metaphorically, alluding to the moment something comes into contact with you, in which instant you have a direct apprehension of its properties and nature ... here, applied to God.

threadbare, looking as though it would soon be worn out, tattered and ready to tear. And at this I was greatly amazed, thinking, 'This is surely an unseemly garment for the Servant, who is so highly loved, to stand in before so honourable a Lord.'

[15] And there was shown within him a foundation[488] of love that he had for the Lord that was equal to the love that the Lord had for him. The wisdom of the Servant saw inwardly that there was one thing he could do that would be of honour to the Lord. And the Servant, out of love, having no regard for himself, nor to anything that might befall him, jumped up in great haste and ran at his Lord's command to do that thing which was his wish and to his honour, for it seemed by the appearance of his clothing that he had laboured continually at demanding work for a long time. But from the inward sight that I had, both of the Lord and of the Servant, it seemed that he was newly hired, that is to say, only just starting this work as a Servant who had never been sent out before.

[16] There was a treasure in the earth[489] which the Lord loved, and I wondered at this and considered what it might be. And I was answered in my

[488] Translating *ground*.

[489] See Matt 13:44, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid' (NRSV).

understanding, 'It is a food that is appetising and appealing to the Lord.'[490] For I saw the Lord sitting like a man, and I saw neither food nor drink that could be served to him. That was one surprise. Another surprise was that this stately Lord had just one Servant, the one whom he sent out. I looked on and wondered about what sort of labour the servant was being sent to. And then I understood that he would do the greatest labour and the most demanding work there is. He would be a gardener,[491] digging and ditching, and sweating and turning the earth up and down, searching the depths of the earth, and watering the plants at the right time. And this would continue to be his work, and he would make sweet streams run, and make pleasing, abundant fruit spring up, which he would bring before the Lord and serve to him for his pleasure. And he would never return to his Lord until he had

[490] Fr John-Julian conjectures that this may be a reference to Jn 4:32 and 34, 'But he [Jesus] said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." / Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work."' (NRSV).

[491] Mary Magdalene mistakes the risen Jesus for a gardener at Jn 20:15, 'Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."' (NRSV), and in sermons and mystical texts of this period, God and Jesus were frequently portrayed as gardeners, cultivating the human soul.

prepared this food all ready as he knew the Lord liked it, and then he would take this food, with the drink, and bear it most respectfully before the Lord. And all this time the Lord would sit, right at the same place, waiting for the Servant whom he had sent out.

[17] And yet I wondered about where the Servant came from, for I saw in the Lord that he has within himself unending life and all manner of goodness, save the treasure that was in the earth, and even this had its ultimate source in the Lord, in the wonderful depths of his unending love.[492] But it was not entirely to his honour until his Servant had thus skilfully prepared and brought it before him, into the Lord's presence. And around the Lord there was absolutely nothing but wilderness, and I did not entirely understand what this example meant, and that was why I wondered where the Servant came from.

[18] The Servant I understood to be the Second Person of the Trinity, and I understood that the Servant is Adam, that is to say, all men. And therefore, when I speak of the Son, I mean the Godhead, which is equal with the Father, and when I speak of the Servant, I mean Christ's humanity,

[492] Translating *and that was groundyd within the lord in mervelous depnesse of endlesse love*.

which is the true Adam. The closeness of the Servant symbolises the Son, and his standing on the left side symbolises Adam. The Lord is God the Father, the Servant is the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit is the love that is equally in them both.

[19] When Adam fell, God's Son fell, and because of the perfect union that was made in Heaven,[493] God's Son could not be separated from Adam, for by Adam I understand all mankind. Adam fell from life to death into the vale[494] of this wretched world, and after that into Hell. God's Son fell with Adam into the vale[495] of the Maiden's womb, and she was the fairest daughter of Adam, in order that Adam be excused blame in Heaven and on earth, and with his mighty power, he fetched Adam out of Hell.[496] The wisdom and the goodness that was in the Servant symbolises God's Son, and the poor clothing of a labourer standing near the left side symbolises the humanity of Adam with all the misfortune and weakness that follows from it, for in all this our good Lord showed his own Son and Adam as but one man.

---

[493] Julian discusses the union between the Second Person and humankind in LT53–6.

[494] Translating *slade*.

[495] *Slade* again.

[496] Another reference to Christ's harrowing of Hell, described earlier in LT12.3 in terms of Christ's blood descending into Hell and breaking the bonds of those held there. See also LT51.24.

The strength and the goodness that we have come from Jesus Christ, the weakness and blindness that we have come from Adam, these two represented by the Servant.

[20] And thus has our good Lord Jesus taken upon himself all our blame. And therefore our Father neither may nor will assign to us any more blame than he does to his own most dear Son, Jesus Christ. Thus was he[497] the Servant before his coming to the earth, standing ready before the Father, prepared for the time he would send him to do the glorious deed by which mankind was brought back to Heaven. That is to say, although he is God, equal with the Father in respect to the Godhead, yet in his foreseeing purpose that he would become a man to save mankind in the fulfilling of his Father's will, so he stood before his Father as a Servant, willingly taking upon himself all our burden. And then he jumped up eagerly at his Father's wish, and immediately he fell very low into the Maiden's womb, having no regard for himself nor for his bitter suffering. The white tunic symbolises his flesh, its single layer shows that there was absolutely nothing between the Godhead and his humanity. Its tight fit signifies poverty, its age shows that Adam wore it, its staining

[497] i.e., Jesus.

shows the sweat of Adam's toil, and its shortness reveals the Servant to be a labourer.

[21] And so I saw the Son standing, meaning this in his intention, 'Look, my dear Father, I stand before you in Adam's tunic, all ready to jump up and run. I wish to be on earth for your honour, when it is your wish to send me. How long must I wait?'[498] The Son knew very well the time of the Father's will, and for how long he must wait, that is to say, in so far as he is the Godhead, for he is the Wisdom of the Father, therefore what he said was shown in respect of the understanding of Christ's humanity, for all mankind that shall be saved by the sweet Incarnation and the Passion of Christ, all are Christ's humanity, for he is the head, and we are his limbs,[499] for whom the day and the time is not known when every passing misery and sorrow shall have its ending, and when everlasting joy and bliss shall be fulfilled, the day and time of which the whole company of Heaven longs and desires to see.[500] And all who are under Heaven who shall come there, their way is by

[498] Cf. Lk 22:15.

[499] See 1 Cor 12:12 and 27, 'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it' (NRSV).

[500] See Mk 13:32, 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father' (NRSV).

longing and desiring, and this very desiring and longing was shown in the Servant standing before the Lord, or in other words, when the Son was standing before the Father in Adam's tunic, for the longing and desire of all mankind who shall be saved appeared in Jesus, for Jesus is in all who shall be saved, and all who shall be saved are in Jesus, and all through God's love,[501] together with obedience, humility and patience, and other virtues that belong to us.

[22] Also, in this wonderful example I have been taught, as it were, the beginnings of an A B C,[502] through which I may have some understanding of our Lord's intention, for the mysteries of the Revelation are hidden within it (though of course, all the Showings are full of mysteries).

[23] That the father is sitting betokens the Godhead,[503] that is to say, indicates rest and peace, for there can be no work in the Godhead. And that he showed himself as Lord signifies his rule over our humanity. That the Servant is standing betokens labour, and on the left side betokens that he was not entirely worthy to stand right in front of the Lord on

[501] Translating *charyte*.

[502] i.e., a basic education. Learning one's A B C refers to the early stages of reading. The analogy appears again in LT80.1.

[503] God is often portrayed in the Bible as being seated. See for instance Is 6:1, 'I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty' (NRSV).

an equal footing. His jumping up alludes to the Godhead, and his running alludes to Christ's humanity, for the Godhead leaps from the Father into the Maiden's womb, falling when he took on our nature. And in this falling he received a great injury. The injury that he received was our flesh, in which as Son he experienced mortal suffering. That he stood in awe before the Lord, and not right in front, betokens that his clothing was not appropriate for standing right in front of the Lord, not that this might be or should be his duty while he was a labourer. Neither could he sit with the Lord in rest and peace until he had earned his peace rightfully through his hard labour. And that he stood on the left signifies the Father willingly leaving his own Son in his humanity to suffer all men's pains without sparing him. That his tunic was at the point of being torn to rags is understood the blows and the scourging,[504] the thorns and the nails, the drawing and dragging of his tender flesh, as I saw in part the flesh torn from the skull, falling in shreds until the bleeding stopped, then when it began to dry again, cleaving to the bone.[505] And by the wallowing and writhing, groaning and moaning is understood that

[504] Following SLOANE. Julian has already compared the injured and dying flesh of Christ to a cloth in LT17.2.

[505] This whole process is described in detail in LT17.

from the time that he had fallen into the Maiden's womb he could never rise again in all his power until his body was slain and dead, and he had yielded his soul into his Father's hands,[506] together with all mankind for whom he was sent.

[24] And at this point he first began to show his power, for he went into Hell. And when he was there, he raised up out of the deepest depths that great company of those who were rightfully joined to him in high Heaven. The body lay in the grave until Easter morning. And from that time he lay no more. For there was rightfully ended the wallowing and the writhing, the groaning and the moaning. And our foul, mortal flesh that God's Son took upon himself, which was Adam's old tunic, tight, threadbare and short, was then by our Saviour made newly fair, white and bright,[507] and of endless cleanliness, ample and long, fairer and richer than was the clothing which I saw on the Father. For that clothing was blue, and Christ's clothing is now of such a fair, pleasing mixture which is so marvellous

[506] See Lk 23:46, 'Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."' (NRSV).

[507] Perhaps alluding to the Transfiguration of Jesus at Mk 9:2–3, 'And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them' and Matt 17:2, 'And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white' (NRSV).

that I cannot describe it, for it is entirely made of true honour.

[25] Now the Lord sits not upon the earth in a wilderness, but he sits on his rich and noble seat, which he made in Heaven, most to his liking. Now the Son stands before the Father not as a Servant, poorly clothed and half-naked, but he stands immediately before the Father, richly clothed in joyous abundance, with a crown of precious richness upon his head, for it was shown that we are his crown,[508] which crown is the Father's joy, the Son's honour, the Holy Spirit's liking, and unending, marvellous bliss to all who are in Heaven.

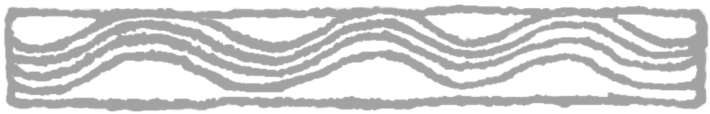
[26] Now the Son stands not before the Father on the left side, as a labourer, but he sits on the Father's right hand[509] in unending rest and peace. But this does not mean that the Son sits beside him on the right hand as one man sits beside another in this life. For, as I see it, there is no such sitting in the Trinity.[510] But he sits on his Father's right hand, that

[508] See LT22.2, 23.6.

[509] See Col 3:1, 'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God' and Heb 1:3, 'The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven' (NIV).

[510] Julian is encouraging her readers not to take literally representations of the Trinity, depicting people sitting next to each other.

is to say, in the highest splendour of the Father's joy. Now is the spouse, God's Son, at peace with his beloved wife, who is the fair Maiden of unending joy.[511] Now sits the Son, true God and true man, at rest and at peace, in his city which his Father from the beginning intended would be allotted to him.[512] And the Father is in the Son, and the Holy Spirit is in the Father and in the Son.



[511] Mary is both Christ's wife and mother. This is an allusion to the Song of Songs, which was read allegorically at this time. Christ as the spouse of his beloved represents the mystical union of Christ with each individual believer.

[512] See Rev 21:2, 'And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband' (NRSV), and see also Rev 11:15, 'Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever"' (NRSV).

CHAPTER 52

God rejoices that he is our Father, Mother and Spouse, and how the chosen have here a mixture of joy and sorrow, but God is with us in three ways, and how we may avoid sin but never perfectly, as in Heaven

And thus I saw that God delights in being our Father, and God delights in being our Mother,[513] and God delights in being our true spouse, and that our soul is his beloved wife. And Christ delights in being our brother.[514] And Jesus delights in being our Saviour. There are five great joys, as I understand, in which he wishes us to take delight, praising him, thanking him, loving him, and endlessly blessing him.

---

[513] God as Mother is given a substantial treatment in LT58–63. This is the first mention of the notion. Julian has already referred to the Church as Mother (at LT46.5), and she has specified mercy as a component of motherhood (at LT48.3).

[514] See Matt 12:47–50, 'Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." But to the one who had told him this, Jesus replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."' (NRSV). (The same text occurs at Mk 3:32–4.)

[2] All those who shall be saved, for the time we are in this life, have in us a marvellous mixture of both joy and sorrow. And we have in us our Lord Jesus Christ, resurrected. And we have in us the wretchedness and the misery caused by Adam's falling and dying. By Christ we are continually cared for, and by his gracious touch we are raised into the certain hope of our salvation.[515] And by Adam's falling we are so broken in our understanding in various ways, by sin and by various sufferings through which we are made despondent and so blind that we can hardly find any comfort. But in our intention we wait for God, and faithfully trust that we shall have mercy and grace; and this is his own working in us. And in his goodness he opens the eye of our understanding through which we gain [spiritual] insight, sometimes more and sometimes less, according to the ability that God gives us to receive it. At moments we are raised to joy, and at moments we are allowed to fall into misery.

[3] And thus is this fluctuation in us so perplexing that we hardly know – regarding ourselves or our fellow Christians – in what state we stand because of the strangeness of these inconsistent feelings, except for each holy act of assent to God that we make when we sense him, truly wishing to be with him with all

[515] Following Spearing.

our heart, with all our soul and with all our strength. And then we hate and despise our evil impulses, and everything that might be the occasion for spiritual or bodily sin. And yet nevertheless, when this sweetness is hidden we fall again into blindness and, in various ways, into misery and distress. But in all this, here is our comfort, that we know through our faith that by the power of Christ, who cares for us, that we never consent to it, but we protest against it, and endure in pain and misery, praying until that time when he shows himself to us again.

[4] And thus we continue in this mixed state all the days of our life. But he wants us to trust that he is always with us, and this in three ways. He is with us in Heaven, true man in his own person, drawing us up, and this was shown by his spiritual thirst.[516] And he is with us on earth, guiding us, and that was shown in the Third Showing, where I saw God in an instant of time.[517] And he is with us, dwelling in our souls endlessly,[518] directing and guiding us, and that was shown in the Sixteenth Showing, as I shall say.[519]

[516] Referring to LT31.2/5.

[517] LT11.1.

[518] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

[519] See LT68.1–4.

[5] And thus in the Servant was shown the blindness and the misery of Adam's falling. And in the Servant was shown the wisdom and the goodness of God's Son.[520] And in the Lord was shown the compassion and the pity of Adam's misery. And in the Lord was shown the high nobility and the unending honour that mankind comes to through the power of the Passion and the death of his most dear Son. And therefore he delights greatly in his falling, for the noble raising and abundance of bliss that mankind has come to surpass what we would have had if he had not fallen, and to see this surpassing nobility my understanding was led into God at the same time that I saw the Servant fall.

[6] And thus we have reason to mourn, for our sin is the cause of Christ's suffering. And we have reason for lasting joy, because unending love made him suffer. And therefore the creature who sees and senses the working of love through grace hates nothing but sin, for of all things, as I see it, love and hate are the most contradictory and most extreme opposites. And despite all this, I saw and understood in our Lord's intention that we may not in this life keep ourselves from sin, as completely and fully pure

[520] In his note, Fr John-Julian emphasises that the example of the Servant should not be understood as sometimes representing humanity and sometimes representing Christ. Julian wants us to understand that these two aspects are always present because they are identical.

as we shall be in Heaven. But we may well, through grace, keep ourselves from the sins which would lead us to endless suffering, as Holy Church teaches us, and avoid venial sin to a reasonable extent, so far as is within our power.[521] And if at any time, in our blindness and our wretchedness, we should fall, then we will readily rise up again, knowing the sweet touch of his grace, and willingly make amends, according to the teaching of Holy Church, depending on the seriousness of the sin, and go forth with God in love, and that we should neither on the one hand fall too low, inclining to despair, nor on the other hand be too reckless, as if we did not care, but meekly face our frailty, knowing that we cannot stay alive even for the twinkling of an eye,[522] without the preservation of grace, and reverently cleave to God, trusting only in him.

[7] For God looks at things one way, and man looks at things in another. For it is appropriate for man to humbly accuse himself, and it is appropriate for our Lord God's own goodness to courteously

[521] Following Watson and Jenkins. In Catholic tradition, a *venial sin* (meaning 'forgivable sin', in contrast with 'mortal sin'), is a lesser sin which does not result in a complete separation from God. This is the only occurrence of its use in the *Showings*. Church doctrine at this time assumed that venial sin persists in everyone, even in the most devout of Christians.

[522] i.e., even for the briefest of moments.

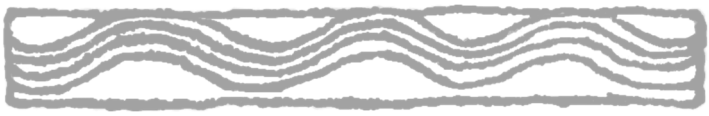
excuse man. And these are the two parts that were shown in the double aspect in which the Lord regarded the falling of his beloved Servant. One was shown outwardly, most gentle and kind, with great compassion and pity. And the other was of inward, endless, true love. And this is how our Lord wishes that we accuse ourselves, willingly, and truly seeing and being aware of our falling and all the harm that comes from it, seeing and knowing that we can never make it good, and that also we willingly and truly see and know the everlasting love that he has for us, and his abundant mercy.[523] And thus by grace to see and know both together in the gentle self-accusing that our good Lord asks of us, and wherever it occurs, he has himself brought it about. And this is the lower part of man's life, shown in the Lord's outward disposition, in which Showing I saw two parts. One is man's pitiful falling, the other is the honourable Atonement that our Lord has made for man. The other disposition was shown inwardly, and this was more elevated, but all one with the first,[524] for the life and power that we have in the lower part [of the soul][525] derives from the higher part, and it comes down to us from our natural self-

[523] Following SLOANE.

[524] Following Spearing.

[525] Julian is referring to that part of us which engages with the world of sensation. Through this faculty, we experience the created world.

love, through grace. Between the one and the other[526] is absolutely nothing, for it is all one love, and this one blessed love is now working doubly within us. For in the lower part there are pains and passions, sorrows and pities, mercies and forgiveness, and such others that are beneficial. But in the higher part there are none of these, but all one complete love and wonderful joy, in which wonderful joy all suffering is wholly destroyed. And in this, our good Lord showed not only that we are excused, but also the honourable nobility he shall bring to us, turning all our blame to unending honour.



[526] i.e., between 'natural self-love' and 'grace'.

CHAPTER 53

The kindness of God assigns no blame to those he has chosen, for in them is a godly will that never consents to sin, for it befits the compassion of God so to be bound to them that there is a substance preserved that can never be separated from him

And thus I saw that he wants us to know that he takes no worse the falling of any creature that shall be saved than he took the falling of Adam, who we know was endlessly loved and kept secure in the time of his need, and now is blissfully compensated with great, surpassing joys, for our Lord God is so good and gentle, and so courteous that he may never assign fault to someone whom he is going to bless and praise forever. And in what I have just said was my desire partly answered, and my great fear somewhat eased by the loving, gracious Showing of our Lord God, in which Showing I saw and understood with complete certainty that in each soul that shall be saved is a godly will that never assented to sin, and never shall,[527] which will is so good that it may never intend evil, but evermore,

[527] See LT37.3.

continually it intends good, and does good in the sight of God.

[2] Our Lord therefore wants us to know this as a matter of faith and belief, and most specifically to know that we all have this blessed will kept whole and safe in our Lord Jesus Christ, such that every variety of being[528] that shall fill Heaven must necessarily of God's perfection[529] be so bound and united in him that in them is maintained a substance[530] which never could nor should be parted from him, and this through his own good will and his unending foreseeing purpose. Yet despite this rightful joining and this endless union, the redemption and the buying back of mankind is necessary and beneficial in everything, as it is done with the same intent and to the same end that Holy Church in our faith teaches us.

[3] For I saw that God never began to love mankind,[531] for in exactly the same way that

---

[528] Following Watson and Jenkins, who suggest in their note that Julian intends to include angelic beings as well as humans.

[529] Translating *shall be fulfyllyd with behovyd nedys of goddys ryghtfulnes*.

[530] Fr John-Julian has *essence*; Spearing has *nature*. It is what something has that gives to it its defining characteristics. Julian is referring to the higher part of the soul which remains permanently united with God.

[531] See Eph 1:3–4, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love' (NRSV).

mankind shall be in unending bliss fulfilling the joy of God with regard to his works, so has that same mankind been in God's foresight, known and loved, according to his rightful intent, from before the beginning. And by the endless intent and consent and the full accord of all the Trinity, the Mid-Person[532] wished to be the ground and the head of this fair nature, out of whom we all come, in whom we shall all be enclosed, and in to whom we shall all go, finding in him our complete Heaven in everlasting joy through the foreseeing purpose of the whole blessed Trinity, from before the beginning. For before he made us, he loved us, and when we were made, we loved him. And this is a love made of the natural and essential[533] goodness of the Holy Spirit, mighty on account of the might of the Father, and wise in remembrance of the wisdom of the Son. And thus is man's soul made by God,[534] and at once joined to God.

[4] And then I understood that man's soul is made from nothing, that is to say, it is made, but of nothing, in this manner: when God was about to make man's body, he took the slime of the earth, which is a material mixed and gathered from all

[532] i.e., Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity.

[533] Translating *substanncyall*, substantial.

[534] or *made from God*, i.e., made from the very essence of God. This ambivalence is the topic of this chapter and the next.

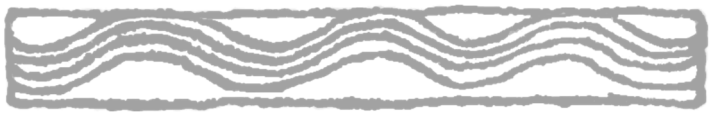
bodily things, and from this he made man's body.[535] But for the making of man's soul, he wished to take nothing at all, but simply made it. And thus is created nature justly united to the Creator, whose substantial nature is uncreated, that is, God. And therefore there neither may be nor shall be anything at all between God and man's soul. And in this unending love, man's soul is kept whole, as all the contents of the Revelations intend to convey and make known, in which unending love we are guided and cared for by God, and shall never be lost.

[5] For he wants us to know that our soul is a life, which life through his goodness and grace shall last in Heaven without end, loving him and thanking him and praising him. And just as we shall be without end, so were we treasured and hidden in God, known and loved from before the beginning.[536] Therefore he wants us to know that the noblest thing that he ever made is mankind, and the most

[535] See Gen 2:7, 'Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being' (NRSV).

[536] This phrase is repeated at LT86.3. See Col 2:2–3, 'I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' and Col 3:2–3, 'Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God' (NRSV).

complete substance and the most sublime power is the blessed soul of Christ. And furthermore, he wants us to know that this most dear soul was preciously bound to him in the making[537] with a knot so subtle and so strong that it is united with God, in which uniting it is made endlessly holy. Furthermore, he wants us to know that all the souls that shall be saved in Heaven, without end, are bound by this knot and united in this uniting, and made holy in this holiness.



[537] i.e., at the point when Christ's human nature was created.

CHAPTER 54

We ought to rejoice that God dwells in our soul and our soul in God, so that between God and our soul is nothing, but as it were all God, and how faith is the ground of all virtue in our soul through the Holy Spirit

And because of the great, endless love that God has for all mankind he makes no distinction, as to how he loves, between the blessed soul of Christ and the least soul that shall be saved. For it is most easy to believe and trust that the dwelling of the blessed soul of Christ is completely supreme in the glorious Godhead.[538] And truly, what I understood in our Lord's meaning is that where the blessed soul of Christ is, there is the substance of all the souls that shall be saved by Christ.

[2] Greatly ought we to rejoice that God dwells in our soul. And we ought to rejoice even more than that, that our soul dwells in God. Our soul is made to be God's dwelling-place, and the dwelling-place of our soul is in God,[539] who is not made. It is a deep

[538] Mutual indwelling is the main topic for this and the next three chapters.

[539] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

understanding that inwardly sees and knows that God, who is our Maker, dwells in our soul. And it is a still deeper understanding to see within and to know that our soul, which is made, has its home in God in its substance, from which substance, through God, we are what we are.[540]

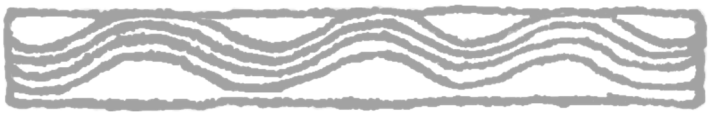
[3] And I saw no distinction between God and our substance, but saw, as it were, all God. And yet I understood that our substance is in God, that is to say, that God is God and our substance is a creation within God.[541] For the Almighty truth of the Trinity is our Father, for he made us and keeps us in him. And the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother in whom we are enclosed. And the exalted goodness of the Trinity is our Lord, and in him we are enclosed, and he in us. We are enclosed in the Father, and we are enclosed in the Son, and we are enclosed in the Holy Spirit. And the Father is enclosed in us, the Son is enclosed in us, and the Holy Spirit is enclosed in us, almighty, all wisdom, and all goodness, one God, one Lord.

[4] And our faith is a power that comes from our natural substance into our sensual soul through the

[540] Following Watson and Jenkins.

[541] Julian does not mean to say that our substance and God are one and the same (that would heretical); she maintains the distinction between God, the creator, who is *unmade*, and the human soul which, of course, is created, i.e., something *made*.

Holy Spirit.[542] And through the power of our faith come all our virtues, for without it no man may receive virtues, for it is nothing else but a correct understanding, with true belief and certain trust of what we cannot see,[543] that in our being we are in God and he is in us. And this power, with all the other virtues within us that God has ordained for us, works great things in us. For Christ is working mercifully in us, and we are by grace in accordance with him through the gifts and the powers of the Holy Spirit. This working makes it such that we are Christ's children, and live as Christians.



[542] Reintroducing the *sensual soul*, not mentioned since LT46.1. Our soul is sensual in the sense that we are able to experience the physical reality of the world that God has made, through the capacities of our senses, coupled with an intellect appropriate for making use of those capacities.
[543] See Heb 11.1, 'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen' (NRSV).

CHAPTER 55

Christ is our way, leading and presenting us to the Father, and as soon as our soul is infused in the body, mercy and grace begin to work, and how the Second Person took our sensuality to deliver us from double death

And thus Christ is our way, leading us safely in his laws, and Christ in his body powerfully bears us up to Heaven. For I saw that Christ, having in him all of us who shall be saved by him, reverently presents us to his Father in Heaven, the gift of which his Father most thankfully receives and courteously gives back to his Son Jesus Christ, which gift and deed are a joy to the Father, and bliss to the Son, and delight to the Holy Spirit. And of all things that concern us, what most pleases our Lord is that we rejoice in the blessed Trinity's joy over our salvation. And this was seen in the Ninth Showing, where more is said on this topic.[544]

[2] And despite all our feelings of misery and joy, God wants us to understand and believe that we are more truly in Heaven than on earth. Our faith comes from the natural love of our soul and from the clear

[544] Julian is referring to LT22.1–2, where the joy, bliss and delight that she has just mentioned are identified as the *three Heavens*.

light of our reason, and from the steadfast remembrance of God which we received when we were first made. And from the time that our soul is breathed into our body, at the point we are made sensual, mercy and grace immediately begin to act, taking care of us and sustaining us with pity and love, in the working of which the Holy Spirit forms in our faith the hope that we shall rise up again to our substance, into the strength of Christ, increased and fulfilled through the Holy Spirit.

[3] Thus I understand that our sensuality is grounded in nature, in mercy and in grace, which ground enables us to receive gifts that lead us to endless life. For I saw quite certainly that our substance is in God. And I also saw that God is in our sensuality, for the very point at which our soul is made sensual, at that same point is the city of God, ordained for him from before the beginning, into which he enters and shall never leave, for God never leaves the soul in which he shall dwell blissfully without end. And this was spoken of in the Sixteenth Showing, where it says, 'Jesus shall never leave the place that he takes in our soul.'[545] And all the gifts that God may give to those he creates, he

[545] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

now gives to his Son Jesus, for us, which gifts he, dwelling in us, has enclosed in him[546] until that time when we are mature and grown, our soul with our body, and our body with our soul, either of them taking help from the other, until we are raised up to the stature that nature fashions.[547] And then on the basis[548] of nature, through the working of mercy, the Holy Spirit graciously breathes into us gifts leading to unending life.

[4] And thus was my understanding led by God, to see in him and to learn the truth, to understand and to know that our soul is a created trinity,[549] like the uncreated blessed Trinity, known and loved from before the beginning, and in its making it is united with the Maker, as was said before.[550] This insight was most sweet and marvellous to behold, peaceful, restful, sure and delectable. And because this honourable uniting was thus made by God between the soul and the body, it must needs be[551] that

[546] i.e., in Jesus.

[547] The gifts God gives to the soul are taken care of by Jesus whilst we are children, until we reach maturity.

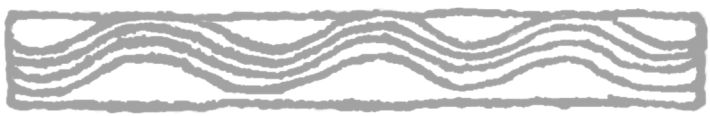
[548] Translating *ground*.

[549] In that the soul possesses the three properties of wisdom, truth and love, reflecting the qualities of the persons of the trinity. See Julian's trinitarian analysis at LT44.2.

[550] See LT53.5.

[551] Translating *it behovyd nedys to be*.

mankind should be saved from a double death,[552] the securing from which could never have happened before the time that the Second Person of the Trinity had taken on the lower aspect of mankind, to whom the higher aspect was united when it was first created. And these two parts were in Christ, the higher and the lower, forming but one soul. The higher part was always in peace with God, in complete joy and bliss. The lower part, which is sensuality, suffered for the salvation of mankind. And these two parts were seen and felt in the Eighth Showing, in which my body was filled full with the experience and awareness of Christ's Passion and dying. And furthermore, with this came a subtle awareness and a secret, inner vision of the higher part, and this was shown at the same time that I could not, for the meantime, look up to Heaven,[553] and that was because of that same powerful contemplation of the inner life, in which inner life is that exalted substance, that precious soul which is endlessly rejoicing in the Godhead.



[552] The death of the body through the processes of nature, and the death of the soul through sin.
[553] LT19.1–2.

CHAPTER 56

It is easier to know God than our soul, for God is nearer than that, and therefore if we want to have knowing of it we must seek into God, and he wants us to desire to have knowledge of natural mercy and grace

And thus I saw with complete certainty that we may more readily and more easily come to a knowing of God than we can come to know our own soul. For our soul is so deeply grounded in God, and so endlessly treasured, that we may not come to the knowing of it until we first have knowledge of God, who is its Maker and to whom the soul is united. But despite this, I saw that we have a natural and intense desire to wisely and truly know our own soul, by which we are taught to seek it where it is, and that is in God. And thus by the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit we shall know them both at once, whether we are stirred to know God or our soul, for both stirrings are good and true.[554] God is nearer to us than our own soul, for he is the ground on which our soul stands, and he is the means by which our substance and our sensuality are kept together, so that they shall never be parted, for

[554] *True* here means noble, unfailing, proper, genuine.

our soul sits in God in complete rest, and our soul stands in God in certain strength, and our soul is naturally rooted in God in unending love. And therefore if we wish to have knowledge of our soul, to converse[555] with it, we must seek it in our Lord God,[556] in whom it is enclosed.

[2] And I saw and understood more about this enclosing in the Sixteenth Showing, as I shall say.[557] And regarding our substance, it may rightly be called our soul, and regarding our sensuality, it may rightly be called our soul, and this is because they are united in God. That noble city that our Lord Jesus sits in is our sensuality by which he is enclosed, and our natural substance is enclosed in Jesus,[558] with the blessed soul of Christ sitting in rest in the Godhead. And I saw with complete certainty that we must needs wait in longing and penance[559] until the time when we are led so deeply into God that we completely and truly know our own soul, and truly I saw that into this great depth our good Lord himself leads us, in the same love with which he made us,

---

[555] Translating *dalyance*.

[556] Translating *it behovyth to seke into oure lord God*.

[557] LT68.1–4.

[558] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

[559] Translating *it behovyth nedys to be that we shulde be in longyng and in penance*.

and in the same love with which he bought us through mercy and grace, through the power of his blessed Passion.

[3] And despite all this, we can never come to full knowledge of God until we first know clearly our own soul, for until the time that it attains its full powers, we cannot be fully holy. And this is when our sensuality, by the power of Christ's Passion, is brought up into the substance, with all the benefits that through mercy and grace our Lord shall cause us to gain from our tribulations.

[4] I had a partial insight[560] into this, and it is grounded in nature, which is to say that our reason is grounded in God, who is the ultimate source of being.[561] From this ultimate source of being, mercy and grace spring up and spread into us, working all things in fulfilment of our joy. These are the grounds in which we have our being, our growth and our completion. For in nature we have our life and our being, and in mercy and grace we have our growth and our completion. Nature, mercy and grace are three aspects of one goodness, and where any one of them acts, they all act, in the things that now concern us.

---

[560] Translating *touchyng*. Julian uses this term to refer to receiving direct inspiration from God.

[561] Following Watson and Jenkins.

[5] God wants us to understand this, longing with all our heart and with all our strength to have a greater and greater awareness of them, until the time that we reach completion. For knowing them completely and seeing them clearly is nothing but unending joy and bliss that we shall have in Heaven, which God wants us to begin here, in knowing his love. For by our reason alone we may not benefit, unless we have in equal measure mind[562] and love. Nor may we be saved solely by our being naturally grounded in God, unless we also have mercy and grace that come from the same ground.[563] For through these three[564] working all together we receive all our goodness, of which the first are the goods of nature.[565] For in our first making, God gave us many goods, and even greater goods than we could receive in our spirit alone, for his foreseeing purpose, in his unending wisdom, wanted us to have this twofold nature.[566]

---

[562] Translating *mynde*, mind as the seat of memory, thought, reason, will, imagination, emotion, etc. In contrasting *mind* with reason and love, Julian may mean to emphasise *emotion* over the other capacities possessed by the human mind. Fr John-Julian translates *mynde* as *memory*.

[563] Following SLOANE.

[564] i.e., reason, mind and love.

[565] i.e., human nature.

[566] i.e., in addition to those goods that we can enjoy through our spiritual essence, God is also able to give us further goods that we may enjoy through our physical or 'sensual' aspect. In this sense, we are *doubyll*, 'double', and have a twofold nature.

CHAPTER 57

In our substance we are complete, though in our sensuality we are lacking, which God will restore by mercy and grace, and how the higher part of our nature is bound to God in its making, and in taking on our flesh Jesus is bound to the lower part of our nature, and how other virtues spring from faith, and Mary is our Mother

As regards our substance, he has made us so noble and so rich that we will always work his will and his honour. When I say 'we', I mean those who shall be saved. For truly I saw that we are what he loves, and we do what pleases him, constantly, without any stinting. And from these great riches and from this exalted nobility come a proportion of powers[567] to our soul at the time it was bound to our body, in which bonding we are made sensual beings.[568] And thus in our substance we are

[567] Translating *vertues*. These are the powers, capacities, abilities, skills, by which we engage with the physical world, without which 'sensual' capacities we could not function. We engage with the world by virtue of these capacities.

[568] i.e., physical beings, having the capacity for sensory experiences, and acting in the world.

fulfilled, and in our sensual being we are lacking,[569] which lack God will restore and complete through making mercy and grace abundantly flow into us from his own natural goodness. And so this natural goodness makes mercy and grace act within us, and the natural goodness that we have from him enables us to receive the working of mercy and grace.

[2] I saw that our nature is entirely within God, and he makes a diversity of aspects flow into it from him to work his will, whose nature sustains it, and where mercy and grace restore and fulfil us. And none of these shall perish, for the higher part of our nature is bound to God in its making, and God is bound to the lower part of our nature, taking on our flesh.[570] And thus in Christ our two natures are united, for the Trinity is included in Christ, in whom our higher part is grounded and rooted, and our lower part the Second Person has taken, which nature was prepared for him from the first. For I saw most truly that all the works that God has done, or ever shall do, were completely known to him and

[569] In his note to this passage, Fr John-Julian (2009, 272) remarks that 'In our fleshiness we "are insufficient" only because we are limited by our body to this world.' Julian's point is perhaps that our sensual or sensory capacities are liable to failure or fault; for instance, the glutton's natural capacity to seek food is clearly not working properly. In Heaven, God will remedy such defects.

[570] i.e., through the incarnation of Jesus.

foreseen from before the beginning. And he made mankind for love, and for the same love he himself wanted to become man.

[3] The next good[571] that we receive is our faith, in which our benefiting begins, and it comes from the great riches of our natural substance into our sensual soul, and it is grounded in us, and we in it, through the natural goodness of God, through the action of mercy and grace. And from this come all our goods by which we are guided and saved, for from it come God's commandments, of which we ought to have two sorts of understanding. One is that we ought to understand and know what things he commands, to love them and to keep them. The other is that we ought to know what things he forbids, to hate them and refuse them. For everything that we do is included in these two. Our faith also includes the seven sacraments, each following the other in order, as God has ordained them to us,[572] together with all sorts of virtues, for through the goodness of God, the same virtues that we have received from our substance, given to us by nature, are also, through the working of mercy given to us through grace, renewed by the Holy Spirit. These virtues and gifts

[571] i.e., the next *dyversyte*, coming after *kynde*, 'nature', which was discussed in the previous paragraph.

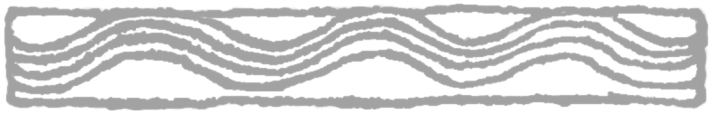
[572] These are the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, ordination and matrimony.

are treasured for us in Jesus Christ, for at the same time that God bound him to our body in the Maiden's womb, he took upon himself our sensual soul, and in taking it on, he enclosed us all within himself. He united it to our substance, in which union he was perfect man, for Christ, having bound to himself all mankind that shall be saved, is perfect man.

[4] Thus our Lady is our Mother, in whom we are all enclosed, and from her we are born in Christ, for she who is Mother of our Saviour is Mother of all who will be saved in our Saviour,[573] and our Saviour is our true Mother in whom we are endlessly born, and out of whom we shall never come. Abundantly, completely and pleasantly[574] was this shown. And it is spoken of in the First [Showing] where he says that we are all enclosed in him, and he is enclosed in us. And it is spoken of in the Sixteenth Showing[575] where he says that he sits within our soul, for it pleases him to reign blissfully in our understanding and to sit restfully in our soul, and to dwell unendingly in our

[573] Our being enclosed in Christ means that we are born with him, making Mary *our* Mother as she is also Christ's Mother.
[574] Translating *swetely*, which in this context may perhaps mean 'easily', 'successfully', 'effectively', or just 'well'.
[575] LT68.

soul, drawing us all into him,[576] in which task he wants us to be his helpers, giving him all our attention, learning his laws and keeping to his teachings, desiring that all that he does be done, confidently trusting in him, for truly I saw that our substance is in God.



[576] Following Fr John-Julian. The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 62.3, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

CHAPTER 58

God was never displeased with his chosen wife, and of the three properties in the Trinity, fatherhood, motherhood, and lordhood, and how our substance is in every person [of the Godhead] but our sensuality is in Christ alone

God, the blessed Trinity who is everlasting being, just as he is endless from before the beginning, just so was it his unending purpose to make mankind, whose fair nature was first prepared for his own Son, the Second Person, and when he wished, in full accord with all the Trinty, he made us all at once. And in our making, he bound us and united us to himself, by which union we are kept as pure and as noble as when we were made. By the power of that same precious union, we love our Maker, and please him, praise him and thank him, and endlessly rejoice in him. And this working which is wrought continually in each soul that shall be saved is the godly will spoken of before.[577]

[2] And thus, in our making, by nature, God Almighty is our Father and God all wisdom is our

[577] In LT37.3 and 53.1.

Mother,[578] and together with the love and goodness of the Holy Spirit, these are all one God, one Lord. And in the binding and in the uniting he is our very true spouse, and we are his praiseworthy wife and his fair maiden, with which wife he was never displeased, for he says, 'I love you, and you love me, and our love shall never be split in two.'[579]

[3] I beheld the working of all the blessed Trinity, in which contemplation I saw and understood these three properties. The property of Fatherhood, the property of Motherhood, and the property of Lordship, all in one God. In our Father Almighty, we are sustained and blessed as regards our natural substance, which is ours through our making, from before the beginning. And in the Second Person, in understanding and wisdom, we are sustained with regard to our sensuality, our restoring and our saving. For he is our Mother, Brother and Saviour.[580] And in our good Lord the Holy Spirit, we find our reward and recompense for our living and our suffering, endlessly surpassing all that we desire, through his marvellous courtesy, from his supreme and abundant grace. For the whole of our life

[578] Fr John-Julian reminds us in his note that in the Old Testament, Wisdom is regarded as feminine, and the identification of the Son with Wisdom accordingly renders him feminine.

[579] This phrase occurs again in LT82.3.

[580] See LT52.1.

comprises these three aspects. In the first is our being. And in the second we have our growth. And in the third we have our completing. The first is nature, the second is mercy. The third is grace.

[4] As for the first, I saw and understood that the supreme power of the Trinity is our Father, and the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, and the great love of the Trinity is our Lord. And all these we have by nature and in the making of our substance. And furthermore, I saw that just as the Second Person is the Mother of our substantial being, so that same most worthy person has now become the Mother of our sensual being, for by God's making we are twofold, that is to say, in our substance and in our sensuality. Our substance is the higher part, which we have from our Father, God Almighty. And the Second Person of the Trinity is the Mother of our nature, through the making of our substantial being, in whom we are grounded and rooted, and through taking on our sensuality,[581] he is our Mother of Mercy. And thus our Mother keeps our parts unparted by working in us in various ways. For in our Mother Christ we benefit and grow, and through mercy he reforms and restores us, and through the power of his Passion, his death, and his rising again, unites us to our substance. Thus does our Mother

[581] i.e., by becoming human.

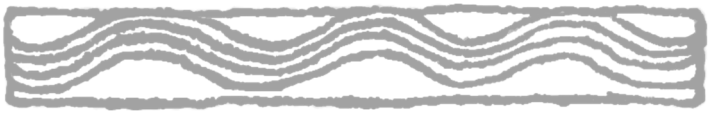
mercifully work for all his beloved children who are submissive and obedient to him. And grace works with mercy, in two ways especially, as was shown,[582] which working belongs to the Third Person, the Holy Spirit. He works, rewarding and giving. The reward is a gift of faith that the Lord makes to those who have struggled. And giving it is a courteous act that he does freely, through grace, fulfilling and surpassing all that the creatures[583] deserve.

[5] Thus in our Father, God Almighty, we have our being. And in our Mother, through mercy we have our reforming and our restoring, in whom our parts are united and all made perfect man, and through the rewards and gifts of grace of the Holy Spirit we are fulfilled. And our substance is in our Father, God Almighty. And our substance is in our Mother, God all wisdom. And our substance is in our Lord God, the Holy Spirit all goodness. For our substance is complete in each person of the Trinity, which is one God. And our sensuality is only in the Second Person, Jesus Christ, in whom are the Father and the Holy Spirit. And in him and by him are we powerfully taken out of Hell and out of the wretchedness on earth, and honourably brought up into Heaven, and

[582] In LT48.3.

[583] *the creatures* are all those people who have been and shall be created and brought into existence.

blissfully united to our substance, increased in riches and ennobled all through the power of Christ and through the grace and working of the Holy Spirit.



CHAPTER 59

Wickedness is turned to bliss through mercy and grace in the chosen, for the nature of God is to return good for ill through Jesus, our Mother in kind grace; and the soul's highest virtue is meekness, on which ground we have other virtues

And we have all this bliss through mercy and grace, the manner of which bliss we might never have had and known unless that property of goodness which is in God, through which we have this bliss, had been opposed. For wickedness has been allowed to rise in opposition to that goodness, and the goodness of mercy and grace has opposed that wickedness and turned all to goodness and honour for all those who shall be saved, for the goodness of mercy and grace is that property in God which works good against evil. Thus Jesus Christ, who works good against evil, is our true Mother. We have our being from him, where the ground of Motherhood begins,[584] with all the sweet protection of love that endlessly follows.

[584] In his note, Fr John-Julian points out that Christ is the source of all motherhood. The idea is not that Christ can be compared to mothers, and in this sense exhibits the qualities of motherhood, but that our mothers are like Jesus.

[2] As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother, and this was shown in all [the Showings], and specifically in these sweet words where he says, 'It is I,'[585] which is to say,

It is I, the power and the goodness of Fatherhood.
It is I, the wisdom and kindness of Motherhood.
It is I, the light and the grace that is all blessed love.
It is I, the Trinity.
It is I, the unity.
It is I, the supreme sovereign goodness of all manner of thing.
It is I, that causes you to long.
It is I, the endless fulfilling of all true desires.[586]

For there the soul is most exalted, most noble, and most honoured, where it is lowest, most meek and most gentle.

---

[585] Translating *I it am*; see LT26.2.

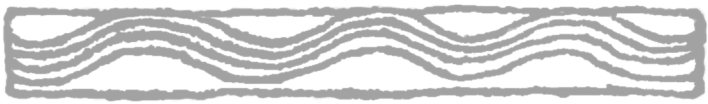
[586] This is obviously an echo of Ex 3:13–14, when God speaks from the burning bush to Moses, who asks: 'Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" Then what shall I tell them?' God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you'" (NIV). Scholars maintain that Ex 3:14 is directly referenced in Jn 8:58, where Jesus states, 'Very truly I tell you ... before Abraham was born, I am!' (NIV)

[3] And from this substantial ground come all the powers of our sensuality, through the gift of nature, and through the help and assistance of mercy and grace, without which we may not benefit. Our great Father, Almighty God, who is being, knows us and loves us from before the beginning of time, in which knowing, in his abounding, marvellous, deep love,[587] through the endless foreseeing counsel of all the blessed Trinity, he wills that the Second Person should become our Mother, our brother and our saviour. From which it follows that as truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother. Our Father wills it, our Mother accomplishes it, and our good Lord the Holy Spirit confirms it. And therefore it is our part to love our God in whom we have our being, thanking him reverently, and praising him for our making, praying to our Mother with all our might for mercy and pity, and to our Lord the Holy Spirit for help and grace. For in these three is our whole life – nature, mercy and grace – from which we receive gentleness, patience and pity,[588] and the hating of sin and wickedness, for it is appropriate to virtue to hate sin and wickedness.

[587] Translating *charyte*.

[588] SLOANE adds to this list by starting with *mekehede*, meekness, humility.

[4] And so Jesus is our true Mother in nature, from our first making, and he is our true Mother in Grace, by taking on our created nature. And all the fair work and all the sweet, kindly functions of his most worthy motherhood are assigned to the Second Person, for in him we have this godly will,[589] whole and safe, without end, both in nature and in grace from his own intrinsic goodness. I understood that there are three ways in which the Motherhood of God may be regarded. The first is as the ground for our own natural making. The second is as the taking on of our nature, from which begins the Motherhood of Grace. The third is as motherhood at work, and in this, through the same grace, there is a spreading forth of length and breadth, of height and depth, without end.[590] And all is one love.



[589] Picking up the thread from LT53.1 that the 'godly will' that is in each of us never assents to sin.

[590] See Eph 3:16–19, 'I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God' (NRSV).

CHAPTER 60

How we are brought again and saved by the mercy and grace of our sweet, natural and ever-loving Mother Jesus, and of the properties of motherhood; but Jesus is our true mother, not feeding us with milk but with himself, opening his side to us and claiming all our love

But now I need to say a little more[591] about this spreading forth, as I understand it in our Lord's meaning, and how we are brought again by the Motherhood of Mercy and Grace into our natural home in which we were made by the Motherhood of natural love, a natural love that never leaves us.

[2] Our natural Mother, our gracious Mother, because he wanted to become our Mother so completely in all things,[592] he made the basis[593] of his work, most meekly and most gently, in the Maiden's womb. And this was shown in the First [Showing], in which he brought that modest maiden before the eye of my understanding, with the innocent appearance

[591] Translating *But now me behovyth to seye a lytyll more*.

[592] In developing her theme as Christ as our mother, Julian only ever refers to Christ using masculine pronouns.

[593] Translating *grounde*.

that she had when she conceived.[594] This is to say, our exalted God, the supreme wisdom in all things, in this humble place he prepared himself and clothed himself in our poor flesh, all ready to perform himself the work of motherhood in all things.

[3] The mother's duties are the closest, the most ready, and the most sure. Closest because they are most natural, most ready because they are most loving, most sure because they are most true.[595] None but he alone may or could ever fully perform this work. We know that each of our mothers gives birth to us, only for us to suffer and die. Ah, but who is it but our true Mother Jesus who alone delivers us[596] to joy and to endless living? Blessed may he be! Thus he carries us within himself in love, and was in labour[597] until in the fullness of time he would suffer

[594] See LT4.4.

[595] The intimacy of a mother's care derives directly from the natural needs of her infant. Her care is ready in the sense of being prepared and immediate, as an innate and instinctive response of love, and it is true in the sense of being reliable and dependable, because it is 'true' and steadfast. 'True' in this context denotes a range of characteristics, including conscientiousness, honesty, scrupulousness, being rightly motivated, constancy, dependability.

[596] In the sense of giving birth to us.

[597] Translating *traveyle* in the context of giving birth. During the Last Supper, Jesus compares the sorrow that his disciples will bear to the pain of a woman in labour: Jn 16:20–1, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will weep

the sharpest birth pangs[598] and the most grievous sufferings that ever were, or ever shall be, and at the last he died.[599] And when he had finished and so born us to bliss, even all this could not satisfy his marvellous love, and this he showed in these exalted, surpassing words of love, 'If I could suffer more, I would suffer more.'[600] He could not die any more,[601] but he would not stop working, therefore he must needs nourish us[602] because the most worthy love of motherhood had made him owe us that.

[4] The mother may suckle her child with her own milk, but our precious Mother Jesus may feed us with himself, and does so most courteously and most tenderly through the Blessed Sacrament[603] that is the precious food of true life, and with all the sweet Sacraments he sustains us most mercifully and graciously, and so he means in these blessed words,

---

and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labour, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world' (NRSV).

[598] Following SLOANE, translating *throwes*; PARIS has *thornes*.

[599] Julian is drawing a metaphorical parallel between the suffering of Christ's Passion and the pain of childbirth.

[600] See LT22.1.

[601] He could not die to any greater extent than he had done already.

[602] Translating *Wherfore him behovyth to fede us.* Following SLOANE.

[603] WESTMINSTER (105v) adds, *of his body and blood*.

where he says, 'It is I that Holy Church[604] preaches to you and teaches you.' That is to say, 'All the health and the life of the Sacraments, all the power and grace of my word, all the goodness that is ordained for you by Holy Church, it is I.'[605] The mother may lay her child tenderly to her breast, but our tender Mother, Jesus, he may homely lead us into his blessed breast through his sweet, open side, and show us there part of the Godhead and the joys of Heaven with the spiritual certainty of unending bliss. And this he showed in the Tenth Revelation,[606] giving the same understanding to these sweet words, where he says, 'See how I love you,' as he looks into his side, rejoicing.

[5] This fair, lovely word 'mother' is so sweet and so natural in itself that it may not be truly said of anyone or to anyone but of him and to him who is the true Mother of life and of all. To the property of motherhood belongs natural love, wisdom and knowing, and it is good.[607] For though bodily birth is only little, humble and modest in regard to our spiritual birth, yet when creatures give birth, it is nevertheless he who does it.[608] The natural, loving

[604] Cf. LT34.2.

[605] See LT26.2.

[606] LT24. The manuscript records this in error as the Ninth Revelation.

[607] Following SLOANE; PARIS has *God*.

[608] i.e., God does all things, see also LT5.2, LT11.1–3, LT34.3.

mother who knows and recognises the needs of her child, cares for it most tenderly, as the nature and disposition of motherhood directs. And ever as it grows in age and stature, she changes her routines,[609] but not her love.[610] And when it has grown older still, she allows it to be chastised for breaking down its vices so as to make the child receive virtues and grace. This rearing, with all that is fair and good, our Lord does in those through whom it is done. Thus he is our natural mother through the working of grace in the lower part, out of love for the higher part. And he wants us to know this, for he wants to have all our love fastened to him. And in this I saw that all the debt we owe, by God's bidding, for his fatherhood and motherhood, is fulfilled by truly loving God,[611] which blessed love Christ works in us. And this was shown in all [the Showings], and especially in these powerful, generous words where he says, 'It is I whom you love.'[612]

---

[609] i.e., the mother will adapt her mothering in accordance with the child's development and particular needs.

[610] Translating *And evyr as it waxyth in age and in stature, she changyth her werkes, but nott her love.*

[611] This is a reference to the Fourth Commandment, 'Honour your father and mother,' (Ex 20:12) which we fulfil by truly loving God.

[612] At LT26.2.

CHAPTER 61

Jesus shows much tenderness in our spiritual birth, even though he allows us to fall; in knowing our wretchedness, he hastily raises us up, not breaking his love for our wrongdoing; he will not let his child perish, for he wants us to have the nature of a child fleeing to him always in our need

And in our spiritual birth, he uses such great tenderness in caring for us that it is beyond any comparison, in as much as our soul has more value in his sight.[613] He kindles our understanding, he prepares our ways, he eases our conscience, he comforts our soul, he lightens our heart, and gives us, in part, knowledge and love of his blessed Godhead, together with, through grace, awareness of his sweet manhood and his blessed Passion, and courteous wonder at his exalted, surpassing goodness. And he makes us love all that he loves, out of love for him, and be pleased with him and with all his works. And when we fall he hastily raises us up in his loving embrace and his gracious touch. And when we are strengthened by his sweet working, then we willingly choose him, and

[613] i.e., more value than the body.

through his grace to serve and to love him, everlastingly, without end.

[2] And yet, after this, he allows some of us to fall more hard and more grievously than ever we did before, as it seems to us. And then those of us who are not fully wise think that all that we have begun has come to nothing. But this is not so. For we need to fall, and we need to recognise it. For if we do not fall, we would not know how feeble and how wretched we are in our own right, neither would we know so completely the marvellous love of our Maker.

[3] For in Heaven, we shall truly see without end, that we have grievously sinned in this life, and despite this, we shall truly see that his love never faltered, nor were we ever of less value in his sight. And through the ordeal of our falling we shall have a complete and marvellous awareness of God's love, without end. For steadfast and marvellous is that love which may not nor will not be broken because of sin. And this is one understanding of how we benefit.

[4] Another is the humility and meekness that we shall get through recognising our fall, for through this we shall be raised up high in Heaven, which rising we might never have come to without that humility. And therefore we need to recognise it, for if we do not recognise it, although we fall, it would

not benefit us. And usually, first we fall, and only later do we recognise it, and both come through the mercy of God.

[5] The mother may allow her child to fall sometimes and suffer in various ways for its own benefit. But for love, she will never allow just any kind of peril to come to her child. Even if an earthly mother did allow her child to perish, our heavenly Mother, Jesus, may never allow us, who are *his* children, to perish.[614] For he is almighty, all wisdom, and all love, and so is none but he, blessed may he be! But often when our falling and our wretchedness are shown to us, we become so dreadfully afraid, and so terribly ashamed of ourselves that we scarcely know where to put ourselves. But then our courteous Mother does not want us to flee away, for nothing could be more unwanted by him. But he wants us to adopt the disposition of children, for when a child is distressed or is afraid, it runs in haste to its mother, and if it may do no more, it cries to its mother for help with all its might. So he wants us to do as the meek child does, saying, 'My kind Mother, my gracious Mother, my most dear Mother, have mercy on me. I have made myself foul and unlike you. And

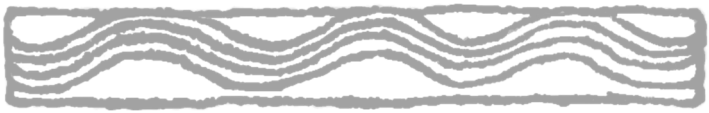
[614] See Is 49:15, 'Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you,' and Ps 27:10, 'If my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me up' (NRSV).

I am not able to make amends without your help and grace.'

[6] And if we do not immediately feel eased, soon we may be sure that he will adopt the disposition of a wise mother. For if he sees that we are benefited by mourning and weeping, with compassion and pity he allows it, out of love, until the ideal time. And then he wants us to adopt the outlook of the child who always naturally trusts in the love of its mother, in joy and in sorrow. And he wants us to embrace in all earnest the faith of Holy Church, and find there our most dear Mother, in solace and true understanding, together with the whole blessed community.[615] For individual people may often be broken, as it seems to themselves, but the whole body of Holy Church was never broken, nor ever shall be, without end. And therefore a sure thing it is, a good and gracious thing, to wish meekly in all earnest, to be fastened and united to our Mother, Holy Church, that is, Christ Jesus. For the flood of mercy that is his most dear blood and precious water is abundant enough to make us fair and clean. The blessed wounds of our Saviour are open, and rejoice in healing us. The sweet gracious hands of our Mother are ready to diligently enfold us, for he, in all this working takes on the very same duties as an

[615] i.e., the Christian community.

actual nurse who has nothing else to do but attend to the safety of her child. It is his function to save us, it is to his honour to do so. And it is his wish that we know it, for he wants us to love him sweetly and to trust in him meekly in all earnestness. And this he showed with these gracious words, 'I watch over you most surely.'[616]



[616] Repeating this phrase from LT37.2.

CHAPTER 62

God's love never allows his chosen to lose time, for all their trouble is turned to endless joy, and how we are all bound to God by his kind nature and his grace, for every kind of nature is in man, and we need not seek far to know its various kinds but to Holy Church

For at that time,[617] he showed our frailty and our falling,[618] our transgressions[619] and our humiliations, our quarrels and our burdens and all our sorrows, to the extent that, as I thought, they might befall us in this life. And with that he showed his blessed might, his blessed wisdom, his blessed love by which he cares for us at such times, as tenderly and as sweetly to his honour and as surely for our salvation as he does when we enjoy the greatest solace and comfort. And to do this he raises us spiritually and honourably to Heaven, and turns everything to his renown and to our joy, without end. Because of his precious love he never allows us to lose time. And all this comes from God's natural goodness, through the working of grace.

[2] God in his being is natural, that is to say, any

[617] i.e., in the course of the Showings.

[618] i.e., our lapsing into sin.

[619] Translating *brekynge*, 'breaking', as in 'breaking the law'.

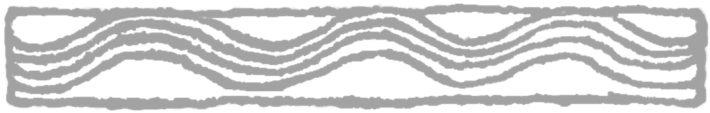
goodness that is natural, it is God.[620] He is the ground. He is the substance. He is the same thing as nature. And he is the true Father and true Mother of nature. And all natures that he has made to flow out of himself to work his will shall be restored and brought again into him by the salvation of man, through the working of grace. For of all the natures that he has set partially in different creatures, in man are they all wholly present, in abundance, and in power, in beauty and in goodness, in lordship and majesty, in every manner of sanctity, worth and honour.

[3] Here may we see that we are all bound to God by nature, and we are bound to God by grace. Here we may see that we do not need to seek far and wide to know various sorts of nature, but to Holy Church, in our Mother's breast, that is to say, in our own soul where our Lord dwells.[621] And there shall we find everything we seek, now in faith and understanding, and afterwards find it truly in himself clearly, in bliss. But no man or woman should take this as applying uniquely to themselves, for it is not so. It is general, for it is our precious Mother, Christ, and for him was this fair nature prepared, for the honour

[620] What is natural and what is good coincide in God.

[621] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 68, 71.8, 81.1–2.

and the nobility of man's making, and for the joy and the bliss of man's salvation, just as he saw, understood and knew from before the beginning.



CHAPTER 63

Sin is more painful than Hell, vile and hurtful to nature, but grace saves nature and destroys sin; the children of Jesus are not yet all born, and never grow beyond childhood, living in feebleness until they come to Heaven where joys are ever newly beginning without end

Here we may see that we truly must by nature hate sin. And we truly must through grace hate sin. For nature is all good and fair in itself. And grace was sent out to save nature and care for nature, and destroy sin, and bring back fair nature to the blessed point from which it came, that is back to God, with more nobility and honour through the virtuous working of grace. For all his holy ones,[622] in the presence of God, shall see with unending joy that nature has been tested in the fire of tribulation in which no lack or fault could be found.

[2] Thus are nature and grace of one accord, for grace is God, just as unmade nature is God. He is two in his manner of working, and one in love, and neither of these work without the other, nor can either be separated from the other. And when

[622] i.e., the saints.

through God's mercy and with his help we come into harmony with nature and with grace, we shall truly see that sin is much worse, more vile and more painful than Hell, beyond any comparison, for it is contrary to our fair nature, for as truly as it is unclean, just as truly is sin unnatural. And for the loving soul that wants to be all fair and shining in God's sight, this is a horrible thing to see, as nature and grace teach.

[3] But let us not dread this, except in as much as dread may help us, but let us meekly offer our lament[623] to our most dear Mother, and he shall sprinkle us all over with his precious blood[624] and make our souls most soft and most gentle, and in the course of time, gently heal us completely, in whatever way is most honourable to him and most joyful to us, without end. And he shall never cease nor stint in this sweet, fair work until all his most dear children are born and brought forth. And this he showed where he gave me the understanding of his

[623] Translating *mone*, moan.

[624] See 1 Pet 1:1–2, 'To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood: May grace and peace be yours in abundance' (NRSV).

spiritual thirst[625] which is that longing in love that shall last until the Day of Judgement.[626]

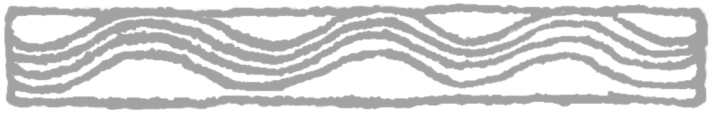
[4] Thus in our true Mother, Jesus, is our life grounded in his own foreseeing wisdom, from before the beginning, with the supreme power of the Father and the great goodness of the Holy Spirit. And in his taking on our nature, he conceived us. And in his blessed dying on the cross, he bears us to unending life. And from that time, and now, and forever until the Day of Judgement, he shall feed us and nurse us, just as the great, supreme nature of motherhood wishes and as the natural needs of childhood ask. Fair and sweet is our heavenly Mother in the sight of our soul, precious and lovely are the gracious children in the sight of our heavenly Mother, having the kindness and gentleness and all the fair virtues which belong to children by nature. For naturally the child does not despair of the mother's love, and naturally the child does not presume to rely on itself, and naturally the child loves the mother, and each one of them loves the other. With these fair virtues, together with all the others that are like this, we can serve and please our heavenly Mother.

[5] And I understood that in this life we can have a status no higher than childhood, with its feebleness

[625] See LT31.2.

[626] Translating *domys day*.

and lack of strength and intelligence, until the time when our gracious Mother brings us up into our Father's bliss. And there shall it truly be made known to us what he means when he says with these sweet words, 'All shall be well, and you shall see it yourself that all manner of thing shall be well.'[627]



[627] The phrase 'all shall be well' occurs frequently in Julian's texts. See LT27.2/3, 31.1, 32.1, 34.3, 35.1, 63.5, 68.7; ST13.10, 15.6, 16.2/3 and 22.5.

CHAPTER 64

THE FIFTEENTH REVELATION *as it was shown. The absence of God in this life is our greatest pain besides other suffering, but we shall suddenly be taken from all suffering having Jesus as our Mother, and our patient waiting is greatly pleasing to God, and God wishes that we take our discomfort lightly, for love, thinking that we are always at the point of being delivered*

And then the bliss of our Motherhood in Christ shall begin afresh in the joys of our Father, God, which new beginning shall last, a new beginning without end. Thus I understood that all his blessed children who have come out of him by nature should be brought back again into his grace. / [628] Before this time, I had a great longing and desire for God's gift to deliver me from this world and from this life,[629] for often I witnessed the sorrow that is here and the well-being and blessed existence that is there. And even if there

[628] SLOANE begins LT64 here, and places the opening sentences, above, at the end of LT63.

[629] See Phil 1:21–3, 'For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better' (NRSV).

had been no suffering in this life other than the absence of our Lord, I sometimes thought that it was more than I could bear. And this made me grieve and constantly yearn. And also through my own wretchedness, sloth and weariness, I did not want to live and to struggle, as it was my lot to do.

[2] And to all this our courteous Lord answered, to give me comfort and patience, and spoke these words, 'Suddenly,[630] you shall be taken from all your suffering, from all your sickness, from all your discomfort and from all your sorrow.[631] And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss. And you shall never again have any manner of suffering, no manner of sickness, no manner of displeasure, no frustrating of desires, but forever joy and bliss, without end. Why should it then grieve you to be patient for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?'[632]

---

[630] See Matt 24:50, 'The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of' (NIV).

[631] Translating *woo*, woe.

[632] Clearly, Julian means to reference the content of Rev 21:1–4: 'Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away ... There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away,' where John describes the New Jerusalem. The question that God closes with reappears at LT64.6 and 65.4.

[3] And in these words, 'Suddenly you shall be taken', I saw that God rewards people for the patience they show in awaiting God's wishes, and for their proper time to die. And I saw that people extend their patience over the entire span of their lives because they do not know the time of their passing. This is a great benefit, because if they knew when that was going to be, they would exhaust this patience before their time came.[633] And also, God wishes that while the soul is in the body, it should seem to itself that it is constantly on the point of being taken, for all this life and all this longing that we have here occupies but a moment,[634] and when we are suddenly taken out of suffering into bliss, then suffering shall be as nothing.

[4] And at this time I saw a body lying on the earth, looking heavy and fearful, and without shape or form, as it were a swollen, stinking mire. And suddenly, out of this body sprang a most fair creature, a little child perfectly shaped and formed, swift and lively, and whiter than the lily, which

[633] See Col 1:11, 'May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience' (NRSV), Jm 5:7, 'Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming' (NIV), and Ps 39:4, 'Show me, Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is' (NIV).

[634] Translating *poynt*.

quickly glided up into Heaven.[635] The swelling of the body signifies the great wretchedness of our mortal flesh, and the littleness of the child signifies the cleanness and purity of our soul. And I thought, 'None of the child's beauty remains in this body, and nor does any of the body's foulness dwell in the child.'

[5] It is most blessed for man to be taken from suffering, more than for suffering to be taken from man. For if suffering is taken from us, it may come again. Therefore this is a supreme comfort and a blissful insight for a longing soul, that we shall be taken from suffering. For in this promise[636] I saw a merciful compassion that our Lord has for us in our sorrow, and a courteous promise of pure deliverance, for he wants us to be comforted by this surpassing joy.[637] And he showed this in these words, 'And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss.'

---

[635] This is a common image at this time, in which the departing soul is depicted as a young child coming out of the body, sometimes shown exiting from the mouth. For instance, many medieval manuscripts, especially books of hours and hagiographies, include depictions of the soul as a small child or human figure being carried away by angels (if saved) or seized by demons (if damned).

[636] i.e., 'Suddenly you shall be taken from all your suffering.'

[637] See Rev 21:4, 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away' (NRSV).

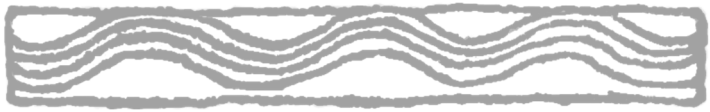
[6] It is God's wish that we set the point of our thought[638] upon this blessed insight as often as we may, and keep it there for as long as we can, through his grace, for this is a blessed contemplation for the soul, that is led by God, and very much to his honour for the time that it lasts. When through our own frailty we should fall back into our former dejection and spiritual blindness, and feelings of spiritual and bodily suffering, it is God's wish that we know that he has not forgotten us. And so he means in these words, which he speaks to comfort us, 'And you shall never again experience suffering in any way, nor any manner of sickness, nor any kind of displeasure, no frustrating of desires, but forever joy and bliss without end. Why should it then grieve you to be patient for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?'[639]

[7] It is God's wish that we accept his promises and his comforting with as much generosity and strength as we can. And also, he wishes that we bear our waiting and our hardships as lightly as we can, and set them at nought, for the more lightly that we take them and the less importance we place upon them because of our love, the less suffering we shall have in

[638] i.e., that we apply our concentration.

[639] This question is repeated from where it has already been posed earlier at LT64.2, and will appear again at LT65.4.

feeling them, and the more thanks and reward we shall have for them.



CHAPTER 65

He who chooses God for love with reverent meekness is sure to be saved, and this reverent meekness, says the Lord, is marvellously great and the self is marvellously little; and it is God who wills that we dread nothing but him, for the power of our Enemy is taken in our friend's hand, and therefore all that God does shall be greatly pleasing to us

And then I understood that any man or woman who in this life, out of love, willingly chooses God, may be sure that they are loved without end, by means of an unending love that works that grace in them.[640] For he wants us to remember with confidence that we may be secure in our hope of the bliss of Heaven while we are here, as we shall be certain of it when we are there. And the more pleasure and joy we take in this certainty, with reverence and humility, the better is he pleased.

[2] For as it was shown, this reverence that I mean is a holy, respectful fear of our Lord to which humility is fastened, and that is that a creature sees the Lord as marvellously great and herself as marvellously little. For these virtues are had

[640] i.e., the grace of choosing God.

endlessly by those who are loved by God. And it may now be seen and felt in some measure by the gracious presence of our Lord when he is with us, which presence above all things is the most desired, for it works that marvellous certainty of true faith and sure hope through the greatness of love[641] and a sweet, delightful fear.

[3] It is God's wish that I see myself as much bound to him in love as if everything that he has done had been done specifically for me. And this should every soul think in regard to those he loves and who love him. That is to say, the love[642] of God creates in us such a unity that when it is truly seen, no man can separate themselves from any other. And thus ought each soul to think that God has done for him alone all that he has done.

[4] And this he showed to make us love him and like him and fear nothing but him, for it is his wish that we know well that all the might of our Enemy is locked in our Friend's hands.[643] And therefore the soul that knows this with certainty, she shall not fear anyone but him whom she loves. She sets all

[641] Translating *charitie*.

[642] Translating *charyte*.

[643] Julian has already spoken of God's friendship in LT40.1, but this is the first time she identifies God specifically as *our friend*. She returns to this theme in LT76.3–4. See also LT14.1, LT49.3, LT71.1.

other fears among afflictions[644] and bodily sickness and delusions.[645] And therefore, although we are in so much pain, sorrow and distress that we can think of absolutely nothing but the state we are in, or what we are feeling, as soon as we can, let us lightly pass over it, and say it is nothing. And why? Because God wants us to know him. For if we know him and love him and reverently fear him, we shall have patience and be at complete rest, and all that he does will be more pleasing to us. And this our Lord showed in these words, 'Why should it grieve you to suffer for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?'[646]

[5] Now I have told you about these Fifteen Showings as God graciously presented them to my mind, renewing them with illuminations and inspirations, from the same spirit, I hope, that showed them all.[647] The first of these Fifteen Showings began early in the morning, at about the fourth hour, and they lasted, shown in a most fair

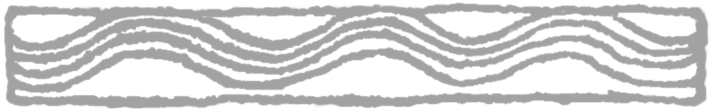
[644] Translating *passions*.

[645] Translating *imaginations*.

[646] Repeating this question from LT64.2/6.

[647] i.e., the same spirit that showed them when they were first experienced, at the height of her sickness, when the crucifix was presented to her.

and orderly sequence, each following the other, until the ninth hour or later.[648]



[648] Translating *none of the day or paste*, taking *none* not as 'noon', but as 'the ninth hour' in the Liturgy of the Hours, intended to coincide with the time of Christ's death on the Cross (about three in the afternoon).

CHAPTER 66

THE SIXTEENTH REVELATION *is the conclusion and confirmation of all fifteen; and of her frailty and grieving in distress, and speaking lightly of the great comfort of Jesus, saying she had raved which, resulting from her great sickness, I suppose was only a venial sin;*[649] *but yet the Devil after that had great power to vex her nearly to death*

And after this the good Lord showed the Sixteenth Revelation on the following night, as I shall say later,[650] and this Sixteenth was the conclusion and confirmation to all the previous Fifteen [Revelations]. But first I must tell you[651] about my feebleness, wretchedness and blindness. I have said at the beginning where it says, 'And then suddenly, all my pain was taken from me,'[652] and I had no further pain or distress or discomfort for as long as the Fifteen Showings lasted. And at the end, it

[649] A venial sin (meaning 'forgivable sin') is a lesser sin that does not result in a complete separation from God and eternal damnation in Hell, in contrast to an unrepented mortal sin. Julian uses the expression 'venial sin' only once, in LT52.6.

[650] In LT68.

[651] Translating *But furst me behovyth to telle yow.*

[652] At LT3.4.

all finished, and I saw no more.[653] And soon my sickness came back, first in my head, with a sound and a noise, and suddenly all my body was filled with sickness, as it had been before, and I was as barren and as dry[654] as if I had had hardly any comfort, and as a wretch I complained bitterly about feeling my bodily pains and for the lack of spiritual and bodily comfort.

[2] Then a religious person[655] came to me and asked how I fared, and I said that I had raved that day, and he laughed loudly and heartily. And then I said that I thought the cross[656] that stood before my face had bled profusely, and hearing these words, the person that I spoke to grew most serious, and marvelled. And I was immediately very ashamed and astonished at my recklessness. And I thought,

---

[653] SLOANE adds, *And sone I felt that I shuld liven and langiren*, And soon I felt that I would live and continue to suffer.

[654] Using the same expression from LT41.1/5, where it was applied to the act of praying.

[655] [655] *Religious* denotes someone under vows in a religious order, probably a friar, canon, or a Benedictine monk from the Benedictine Priory in Norwich; this may have been Adam Easton, who we know was in Norwich at this time (Holloway 2003, x). Whoever it was, it is not unlikely that this person was Julian's familiar confessor or spiritual director. However, in light of her remark later in this paragraph, 'But I could tell it to no priest...' we may presume that the religious person is in fact not a priest, since she has just told him of her revelations.

[656] As noted earlier regarding LT3.3, *cross* for Julian means crucifix, a cross bearing a three-dimensional image of Christ.

'This man takes seriously the least word that I might say, who saw no more than what I told him.' And when I saw that he took it so seriously and with such great reverence, I grew most greatly ashamed and wanted to make my confession. But I could tell it to no priest, for I thought, 'Why should a priest believe me, when by saying that I raved I showed that I myself did not believe our Lord God?' – although I truly believed him[657] for the time that I saw him, and thus was it my wish and my intention forever to do so, without end. But as a fool, I let it pass out of my mind.

[3] Oh, look how wretched I was! This was a great sin and a great ingratitude, that I, through folly, because I felt a little bodily pain, so stupidly lost for the time being the comfort of all these blessed Showings from our Lord God. Here you may see what I am in myself. But our courteous Lord would not leave me like this. And I lay still till night, trusting in his mercy, and then I began to sleep.

[657] i.e., God.

CHAPTER 67

[There is no chapter division in SLOANE at this point. SLOANE appends the text of PARIS Chapter 67 to the text of Chapter 66. (Watson and Jenkins follow the chapter divisions of PARIS. Windeatt and Spearing follow SLOANE.) Accordingly, there is no descriptive rubric from SLOANE to introduce this Chapter.]

And as soon as I had fallen asleep, it seemed to me that the Fiend took me by the throat, pushing right into my face a visage like that of a young man, long and amazingly thin. I had never seen anything like it.[658] The colour was red, like a tile that has been newly fired,[659] with black spots over it, like freckles, only more dirty than a tile. His hair was red, like rust, untrimmed at the front, with side-locks hanging over the temples. He grinned at me with a malicious look that revealed white teeth, so big that I thought they made him all the more ugly. His body and hands were misshapen, but with his paws he held me by the throat,

[658] The physical reality of demonic attack was accepted as fact in Julian's time.

[659] Spearing in her note informs us that 'Norfolk floor and roof tiles were typically bright red and unglazed.'

intending to stop my breath and kill me. But he could not.

[2] Unlike all the others, this terrifying Showing came while I was sleeping. And for all this time I trusted that I would be saved and protected by the mercy of God. And our courteous Lord gave me grace to wake, for I was scarcely alive. The people who were with me saw this and wet my temples, and my heart began to take comfort. And at once a little smoke came in at the door, together with a great heat and a foul stench.[660] And then I said, 'Blessed be the Lord,[661] is everything on fire, here?' For I supposed that there had been a real bodily fire that would have burned us all to death. I asked those who were with me if they could not smell any stench, and they said, no, they could smell nothing.[662] I said, 'Blessed be God.' For then I knew for sure that it was the Fiend who had come to tempt me.[663] And immediately I remembered what our

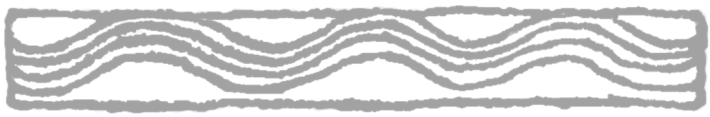
[660] Smoke, heat, and a foul stench traditionally accompany the manifestations of demons.

[661] Translating *Benedicite dominus*. This expression has occurred before, in LT4.3 and 8.1.

[662] Fire and the smell of burning sulphur had long been associated with the Devil and demonic works. See Rev 20:10, 'And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever' (NRSV).

[663] SLOANE has *tempest*, torment.

Lord had shown me that same day, together with all the faith of Holy Church, for I saw them both as one, and fled to them for my comfort.[664] And at once, everything vanished away,[665] and I was brought to great rest and peace, free from sickness in my body or fear in my mind.



[664] See LT19.1, where Julian takes refuge in the cross.
[665] Cf. LT68.8.

CHAPTER 68

[This is Chapter 67 in SLOANE.]

Of the glorious city of the soul which is so nobly created that it could not be made better, in which the Trinity rejoices everlastingly and the soul may have rest in nothing but God, who is seated there, ruling all things

And then our good Lord opened my spiritual eye and showed me my soul in the middle of my heart. I saw the soul so wide as if it were an endless citadel, and also as it were a blessed kingdom. And from the properties I saw in it, I understood that it is an honourable city. In the middle of that city sits our Lord Jesus,[666] true God, true man, a fair person, and of large stature, highest bishop, most solemn king, honourable Lord. And I saw him clothed in stately honours. He sits squarely in the middle of the soul,[667] at peace and rest,[668] and

[666] Adding *sits* from SLOANE.

[667] Following Watson and Jenkins. The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 71.8, 81.1–2.

[668] See 1 Cor 3:16, 'Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?' and 2 Cor 6:16, 'I will live in them and walk

he rules and guards Heaven and earth and all that is. The manhood sits at rest with the Godhead. The Godhead rules and guards without any help or effort. And the soul is completely filled by the blessed Godhead, who is sovereign might, sovereign wisdom and sovereign goodness.

[2] As far as I can see, Jesus shall never leave the place that he takes in our soul, without end. For in us is his homeliest home and his unending dwelling, and in this he showed the pleasure that he takes in the making of man's soul. And as much as the Father had the power to make a creature, and as much as the Son knew how to make a creature, just as much did the Holy Spirit wish that man's soul be made, and so it was done.[669] And therefore the blessed Trinity rejoices without end in the making of man's soul, for he saw from before the beginning what would please him without end.

[3] All things that he made declare his lordship. My understanding of this was given at the same time, through the example of a person who is taken to see the great splendour and kingdom belonging to a lord, and when he has seen all the splendour below, marvelling, he was stirred to seek up above

among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people' (NRSV).

[669] Following SLOANE and Fr John-Julian.

for that high place where the lord dwells, knowing through reason that he dwells in the most worthy place. And thus I truly understood that our soul may never have rest in anything that is beneath itself. And when it rises up above all creatures into itself,[670] it cannot abide there contemplating itself, for all its contemplating is blessedly set upon God who is the Maker dwelling within, for in man's soul is his true dwelling.

[4] As far as I can see, the greatest light and that shining the brightest in the city is the glorious love of our Lord God.[671] And what could make it rejoice in God more, than to see in him his rejoicing in us, the greatest of all his works? For I saw in this same Showing that if the blessed Trinity could have made man's soul any better, any fairer, any nobler than it was made, God would not have been fully pleased with the making of man's soul. But because he made man's soul as fair, as good, as precious as he could make a created thing, the blessed Trinty is therefore fully pleased, without end, with that making of man's soul. And he wants our hearts to be vigorously raised above the depths of the earth and all vain sorrows, and rejoice in him.

---

[670] That is, rise into its true essence, which is in God.

[671] See Rev 21:23, 'And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb' (NRSV).

[In SLOANE, Chapter 68 begins here, with this rubric:]

Of certain knowledge that it is Jesus who showed all this, and that it was no raving, and how we ought to have sure trust in all our tribulations that we shall not be overcome

This was a delectable sight and a restful Showing that is without end, and the contemplation of this, while we are here [in this life], is most pleasing to God and the greatest good fortune to us. And the soul that contemplates it thus makes itself like the one contemplated, and by his grace in rest and peace is united with him. That I saw him seated was a singular joy and bliss to me, for the fact of his sitting shows that he dwells there unendingly. And he gave me certain knowledge that it was he who had shown me everything that came earlier.

[6] And when I had contemplated this with deliberation, then our good Lord most gently conveyed these words, without using his voice and without opening his lips, just as he had done before,[672] and said most sweetly, 'Now, know it well, that it was no raving that you saw today. But take it and believe it, hold firmly to it, and be

[672] See LT13.

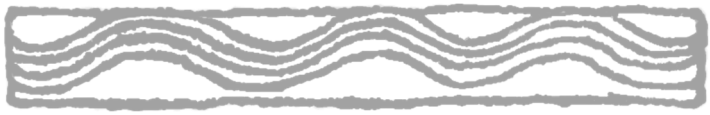
comforted by it, and trust to it,[673] and you shall not be overcome.' These last words were said to instil absolute certainty that it was our Lord Jesus who had shown me everything. And just as with the first words that our good Lord revealed, referring to his blessed Passion, 'Through this is the Fiend overcome,'[674] he said these last words in just the same way, in complete faithfulness, referring to all of us, 'You shall not be overcome.' And all this teaching and this true comfort is generally applicable to all my fellow Christians, as it was stated before, and this is the will of God.

[7] And these words, 'You shall not be overcome,' were said most intently and most forcefully for security and comfort against all tribulations that may come. He did not say that you shall not be troubled, that you shall not suffer, or that you shall not be distressed, but he said, 'You shall not be overcome.' God wants us to take heed of these words and that we be ever strong in faithful trust in our well-being and sorrow. For he loves us and is pleased with us, and so he wants us to love him and be pleased with him and completely trust in him, and all shall be well.

[673] Repeated at LT70.3.
[674] In LT13.1.

[8] And soon everything came to a close, and I saw no more after this.[675]

[Here, Julian concludes her direct encounter with the divine. The following chapters, LT69–86, shift from the immediacy of her visions to thoughtful reflections on the Showings she has already recorded, exploring their meaning and implications.]



[675] Cf. the concluding sentence of LT67.2.

CHAPTER 69

Of the Devil's second, long temptation to despair, but she trusted strongly in God and in the faith of Holy Church, rehearsing the Passion of Christ by which she was then delivered

Then the Fiend came again, with his heat and with his stench, and made me most anxious. The stench was so vile and so distressing, and the bodily heat was also terrible and tormenting. Also, I heard the sound of chattering, as if there had been present two individuals, and both it seemed to me were talking at the same time, as if they were having the most intense discussion, and all was soft whispering. And I did not understand what they said. And I thought this would drive me to despair, for it seemed to me that they were mocking the saying of prayers when they are spoken crudely, completely lacking in that devout intent and thoughtful attention which we owe to God when we pray.

[2] And our good Lord gave me grace to completely trust in him and to comfort my soul by speaking aloud, just as I would have done for anyone else who was similarly burdened. I thought this anxiety could not be compared to any other.

CHAPTER 70

[SLOANE places the chapter division later, at the end of the second paragraph, below.]

I set my eyes upon the same cross that had comforted me earlier on, I set my tongue to speaking of Christ's Passion and rehearsing the faith of Holy Church, and I fastened my heart[676] to God with all my trust and all my strength, so that I thought to myself, saying, 'You now have a great duty to keep yourself in the faith, in order that you should not be taken by your enemies. If now, from this time and ever more, you could be diligent in keeping yourself from sin, this would be a good and excellent occupation.' For I truly thought that were I safe from sin, I would be completely safe from all the fiends in Hell and the enemies of my soul.

[2] And thus the Fiend occupied me all that night and the next morning until it was after sunrise.[677]

---

[676] Fr John-Julian (2009, 320) in his note remarks that Julian uses the word *heart* twenty-four times in the course of the *Showings*, but that this term is never used with our modern meaning of *seat of the emotions*. For Julian, the heart is the location of one's will and intellect, making it much closer to our modern concept of *mind*.

[677] Translating *about pryme day*, first hour of the day, which generally refers to the time just after sunrise.

And at once they departed and were all gone, leaving nothing but that stink which lasted still a while. And I scorned him, and thus I was delivered from him by the power of Christ's Passion, for through that is the Fiend overcome, as our Lord Jesus Christ said before.[678]

[SLOANE Chapter 70 starts here, preceded by this rubric:]

In all tribulation we ought to be steadfast in the faith, trusting strongly in God, for if our faith had no enemies it should deserve no reward, and how these Showings are in the faith

Throughout all these blessed Showings, our good Lord gave me to understand that the vision would end,[679] which blessed Showings faith preserves through God's own good will and through his grace, for he left me with neither sign nor token by which I might remember it all.[680] But he

[678] In LT13.4.

[679] In contrast to some other mystics whose lives Julian would have known – among them Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena – who experienced visions throughout the course of their lives, she comes to understand that this will not be her experience.

[680] Julian appears to be referring to instances where some who have experienced mystical communion with God or Christ were given a physical token of the encounter, such as Catherine of Siena and Catherine of Alexandria receiving wedding rings (see Windeatt's note), or Francis of

left me with his own blessed words which I understood clearly, commanding me most forcefully to believe it. And so I do. Blessed may he be! I believe that it was our Saviour who showed it, and that what he showed is of the faith, and therefore I love it, ever rejoicing, to which I am bound through the meaning of his own words which follow next. 'Hold firmly to it, and be comforted by it, and trust to it.'[681] Thus I am obliged by my faith to hold to it.

[4] For on the same day that it was shown, at the point when the vision was over, as a wretch I forsook it, and openly said that I had raved.[682] Then our Lord Jesus, in his mercy, would not let it perish, but showed it to me all again within my soul with greater clarity in the blessed light of his precious love,[683] saying these words most emphatically and most gently, 'Now know it well, it was no raving that you saw this day,' as if he had said, 'Because this

---

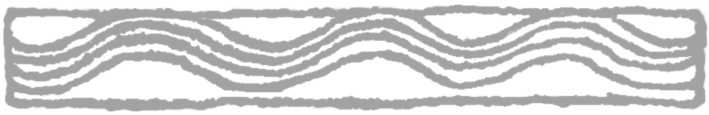
Assisi receiving the stigmata. There is perhaps a tone of disappointment in Julian's remark, because her receiving such signs would have established an extra degree of authenticity to the Showings.

[681] Quoted from LT68.5.

[682] In LT66.2.

[683] Julian is perhaps referring to the intervening period of mystical insights and reflections between the event of her Showings when she was ill in May 1373 and her later writing up the account we are now reading, which seems in some degree to contradict her earlier understanding that her mystical communications with God would not continue beyond her first experiences of them.

vision passed from you, you lost it, and were not able to hold on to it. But know it now,' – that is to say – 'now that you understand it.' This was said not only for that specific time, but also for me to set the ground of my faith upon it, as he said immediately afterwards, 'But take it, and believe it, hold firmly to it, and be comforted by it, and trust to it, and you shall not be overcome.'[684]



[684] Quoted from LT68.6.

CHAPTER 71

[SLOANE does not start Chapter 71 for another two paragraphs.]

In these six words[685] that follow from 'take it',[686] his intention is to fasten their meaning faithfully in our hearts, for he wishes it to dwell with us in faith until our life's end, and afterwards in complete joy, wishing that we ever have faithful trust in his blessed promises, knowing his goodness. For our faith is opposed in a variety of ways by our own blindness and our spiritual enemies within and without. And therefore our most dearly loved friend[687] helps us with spiritual insight and true teaching in a variety of ways within and without, by which we may know him. And therefore, in whatever way he teaches us, he wishes that we perceive him wisely, receiving him sweetly, and keep ourselves in him faithfully.

[2] For as I see it, there is no goodness that can be held to in this life that is above faith, and beneath faith there is no health for the soul. But our Lord

[685] The six words at the end of LT70.4 are *take*, *believe*, *hold*, *comfort*, *trust*, and *overcome*.

[686] Continuing the discussion from the end of LT70.4.

[687] Following Spearing (1998).

wants us to hold to the faith, for through his goodness and his own works, we must hold ourselves to the faith, and by his permitting it, through spiritual adversity we are tested in our faith and made strong. For if our faith did not face adversity, it would deserve no reward, as far as my understanding goes of our Lord's intention.

[Sloane places the numeric heading and rubric for Chapter 71 at this point:]

Jesus wants our souls to regard him with gladness, for the countenance he shows us is happy and loving, and how he shows to us three kinds of countenance, one suffering, one compassionate, and one blessed

Cheerful and happy and sweet is the blissful, loving demeanour that our Lord directs towards our souls, for he watches us constantly, living in love-longing,[688] as he wants our souls to be in good cheer towards him, to repay to him his reward.[689] And so I hope that through his grace he shall draw the outer disposition to the inner, and shall do so still more, and make us all at

[688] In all other instances, 'love-longing' is applied to Christ, and not to humanity, as it is here.

[689] In LT22.2, Julian has explained how humankind is the gift of the Father to the Son.

one with him and with each other, in the true and lasting joy that is Jesus.

[4] I remember three kinds of demeanour[690] in our Lord. The first is the demeanour of his Passion that he showed while he was with us in this life, dying.[691] And though the thought of this is sorrowful and grievous, yet it is cheerful and happy, because he is God. The second kind of disposition is pity and sympathy and compassion,[692] and this he shows to all those who love him who have need of his mercy, with the certainty of his protection. The third is the blessed demeanour as it shall be without end,[693] and this was most often shown, and continued the longest.[694] And thus in the time of our suffering and our sorrow he shows to us the demeanour of his Passion and his cross, helping us to bear it through his own blessed strength. And in the time of our sinning he shows to us his demeanour of compassion and pity, greatly helping us and defending us against all our enemies. And these two are the most common demeanours that he shows to us in this life,

[690] Julian uses the term *chere*, 'cheer', whose literal meaning is 'face', especially referring to the countenance or expression that the face bears, and by extension means disposition or demeanour.

[691] Discussed in detail in LT3–21.

[692] Described in LT27–31.

[693] See LT21–6.

[694] Alluding to the allegory of the Lord and the Servant. See LT51–68.

mixing with it the third, and that is his blessed countenance that in part is as it shall be in Heaven. And this is shown by the touch of grace in the form of a sweet illumination of our spiritual life,[695] by which we are sustained in true faith, hope and love,[696] with contrition and devotion, and also with contemplation and all manner of true joys and sweet comforts. The blessed countenance of our Lord God accomplishes this in us through grace.

[In SLOANE, Chapter 72 begins here. PARIS has no chapter division to mark the beginning of Chapter 72, and the text that follows simply continues the text of Chapter 71. The rubric for Chapter 72 in SLOANE reads:]

Sin in the chosen souls is mortal for a time, but they are not dead in the sight of God, and how we have here cause for joy and lamentation because of our blindness and the burden of our flesh, and of the most comforting countenance of God, and why these Showings were given.

But now I must tell[697] in what manner I saw mortal sin in those creatures who will not die as a result of sin, but live unendingly in the

[695] Translating *But now me behovyth to tell.*
[696] Translating *charite.*
[697] Translating *But now me behovyth to telle.*

joy of God.[698] I saw that two contraries could not be together at the same place, the most contrary being the highest bliss and the deepest suffering.

[6] The highest bliss is that of possessing God in the clarity of endless light, truly seeing him, sweetly feeling him, peacefully possessing him in the fullness of joy. And thus was the blessed demeanour of our Lord God shown in part, in which showing I saw that sin is what is most contrary to this to the extent that for as long as we are mixed with any aspect of sin, we shall never clearly see the blessed countenance of God. And the more horrible and grievous that our sins are, the further are we for that time from this blessed sight.

[7] And therefore it often seems to us that we are in peril of death and in some part of Hell on account of the sorrow and suffering that sin brings to us, and in this sense for the time being, we are dead with regard to having a true vision of our blessed life. But in all this I saw with certainty that we are not dead in the sight of God, nor does he ever leave us. But he shall never have his full bliss in us until we have our full bliss in him, truly seeing his fair, blessed countenance, for we are ordained to that by nature, and this we get by grace.

---

[698] An unconfessed mortal sin was believed at this time to condemn one's soul to Hell. Julian's revelation offers a different understanding.

[8] Thus I saw how sin is mortal for a short time to those blessed creatures of unending life. And the more clearly the soul sees this blessed countenance, through his loving grace, the more it longs to see it in its fullness, that is to say, in God's own likeness. For even though our Lord God dwells in us now,[699] and is here with us, and calls us and encloses us out of tender love, so that he may never leave us and is more near to us than tongue may tell or heart may think, yet may we never stint in our lamenting nor our weeping, nor in our seeking nor in our longing until that time when we shall see his blessed countenance clearly, for in that precious sight no sorrow can remain nor comfort fail.

[9] And in this I saw reason for mirth and reason for lamenting. Reason for mirth is that our Lord, our Maker, is so near to us and in us, and we in him through the certain protection of his great goodness. Reason for lamenting in that our spiritual eye is so blind and we are so borne down with the weight of our mortal flesh and the darkness of sin, that we cannot see our Lord God's countenance clearly. No, and because of this darkness, scarcely can we believe in or trust in his great love and the certainty of our

[699] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See also LT51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 68, 81.1–2.

protection, and this is why I say that we may never leave off lamenting nor weeping.

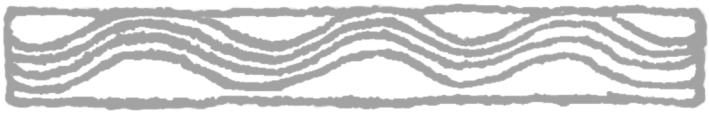
[10] This weeping means not just the pouring out of tears from our bodily eyes, but signifies also a more spiritual understanding, for the natural desire of our soul is so great and so immeasurable that if for our joy and comfort we were given all the noble things that God ever made in Heaven and earth, yet we could not see the fair, blessed countenance of God himself, we would never leave off lamenting nor spiritual weeping, that is to say, never leave off our painful longing until the time when we clearly see the fair, blessed countenance of our Maker. And if we were in all the pain that heart may think or tongue may tell, and we could at that time see his blessed countenance, all this pain would no longer grieve us. Thus is that blessed sight the end of all manner of suffering to loving souls, and the fulfilling of all manner of joy and bliss, and this he showed in the most marvellous words where he says, 'It is I who is most exalted, it is I whom you love, it is I who am all.'[700]

[11] It is fitting for us to have three kinds of knowing. The first is that we know our Lord God. The second is that we know ourselves for what we are, through him, in nature and in grace. The third is

[700] Quoted from LT26.2.

that we meekly know ourselves to be opposed to our sin and opposed to our feebleness. And as I understand it, for these three was the whole Showing made.

[PARIS has no chapter heading for Chapter 72, but commences Chapter 73 immediately after Chapter 71. Obviously, at some point, a scribe made an error. When compared to SLOANE, no text is missing; the scribe appears to have simply omitted the numeric heading for Chapter 72.]



CHAPTER 73

These Revelations were shown in three ways, and of two spiritual sicknesses from which God wishes us to cure ourselves, remembering his Passion, knowing also that he is all love, for he wants us to have security and pleasure in love, and not foolishly taking on the weight of our past sins

All this blessed teaching of our Lord God was shown in three ways, that is to say, by bodily sight, and by words formed in my understanding, and by spiritual sight.[701] As for the bodily sight, I have reported what I saw as accurately as I can. And as for the words, I have reported them exactly as our Lord showed them to me. And as for the spiritual sight, I have spoken of it to some extent, but I may never fully tell it, and therefore regarding this spiritual sight I am stirred to say more, as God will give me grace.

[2] God showed two kinds of sickness that we have. One is impatience or sloth, for our troubles and our suffering weigh heavily upon us. The other is our despair or doubting fear, as I shall say later.[702] He

[701] Repeated from the end of LT9.4.

[702] In LT74.1. Impatience and sloth are associated by commentators in Julian's era as a type of spiritual apathy that may promote despair. 'Doubting fear' is a fear that results from doubting God's goodness.

showed sin in general, in all its aspects, but as for particular sins, he showed only these two. And these two are those that most trouble and torment us, according to what our Lord showed me, regarding which he wants us to be relieved. I speak of such men and women who from the love of God hate sin and set themselves to do God's will. It is through our spiritual blindness and the burdensomeness of our bodies, that we are most inclined to these. And therefore it is God's wish that we know about them, and then we shall reject them, as we do other sins.

[3] And to help us in this, most meekly our Lord showed the patience that he had in his cruel Passion, and also the joy and the delight that he had in that Passion because of love. And this he showed by way of example, that we should gladly and without anxiety bear our sufferings, for this is most pleasing to him and unending advantage to us. And the reason as to why we are burdened with them comes from our ignorance of love. Though all three persons of the blessed Trinity are completely equal in themselves, my soul was taught most about love, yes, and everything we contemplate and find joy in, he wants us to contemplate and

---

These are the only sins specifically identified by Julian, and as Fr John-Julian points out in his note, both these sins manifest a failure of faith and trust in God's love, and as such can be regarded as 'sins of being' rather than 'sins of doing'.

enjoy in love. And it is in this knowledge that we are most blind, for some of us believe that God is almighty and may do everything, and that he is all wisdom and can do everything. But that he is all love and wishes to do everything, there we stop.

[4] And this lack of knowledge is what most hinders those who love God, as I see it, for when we begin to hate sin and amend our ways according to the laws of Holy Church, yet still there lingers a fear that hinders us through our dwelling on ourselves and our past sins, or our present sins for some of us, because we do not keep our promises or preserve the purity that our God sets in us, but often fall into such wretchedness that we are ashamed to speak of it. And our seeing this makes us so sorry and so sad that we can scarcely find any comfort. And this fear we sometimes mistake for humility, but it is a foul blindness and a wickedness, yet we cannot despise it as we do other sins that we acknowledge, for it arises from lack of true judgement and it is contrary to truth. For of all the properties of the blessed Trinity, it is God's wish that above all we have confidence, and take delight, in love. For love makes God's power and wisdom most benevolent to us. For just as through courtesy, God forgets our sin after the time that we repent, so does he wish that we forget our sin with regard to our irrational sorrow and doubting fears.

CHAPTER 74

There are four kinds of fear, but reverent fear is a loving and true one that is never lacking meek love, and yet they are not both the same, and how we should pray to God for them

For I understand that there are four kinds of fear. One is the fear of assault that comes over someone suddenly through frailty. This fear does good, for it helps to purify someone, as does bodily sickness or any other such suffering that is not sin. For all such sufferings help someone if they are accepted patiently. The second is fear of punishment whereby someone is stirred and wakened from the sleep of sin. For someone who is fast asleep in sin is not able for that time to receive the gentle comfort of the Holy Spirit until they have undergone this fear of punishment, of bodily death, and of spiritual enemies.[703] And this fear directs us to seek comfort and mercy from God. And this fear serves us as a gateway, and enables us to have contrition through the blessed touching of the Holy Spirit. The third is

[703] i.e., Satan and his servants.

doubting fear.[704] In as much as doubting fear leads us to despair, God wishes to have it transformed in us into love through a true knowing of love, that is to say, that the bitterness of doubt be turned into the sweetness of tender love, through grace, for it can never please our Lord that his servants doubt his goodness. The fourth is reverent fear,[705] for there is no fear in us that most pleases God except reverent fear, and this is most mild, for the more it is had, the less it is felt, because of the sweetness of love.

[2] Love and fear are brothers, and they are rooted in us by the goodness of our Maker, and for all time they shall never be taken from us. It is in our nature to love, and it is by grace that we love, and it is in our nature to fear, and it is by grace that we fear. It is fitting that God's lordship and fatherhood be feared, as it is fitting for God's goodness to be loved, and it is fitting for us, who are his servants and his children, to fear him because of his lordship and fatherhood, as it is fitting for us to love him for his Godhead. And though this reverent fear and love are not one thing, but two, and are distinct in their properties and working, neither of them may be had without the

[704] The fear that arises when someone doubts that God's forgiveness will really be granted to them, introduced in the previous chapter.
[705] Translating *reverent drede* (i.e., 'dread').

other. And therefore I am sure that he who loves also fears, though he may feel it only a little.

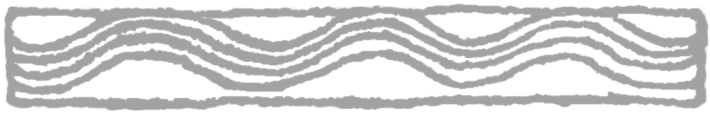
[3] All the fears that face us, other than reverent fear, although they may appear in the guise of holiness, they are not truly so, and this is how we may tell them apart. That fear that makes us hastily flee from all that is not good and fall upon our Lord's breast as a child into its mother's arms,[706] doing so with all our effort and all our attention, knowing our feebleness and our great need, knowing his everlasting goodness and his blessed love, seeking salvation only in him, cleaving to him with faithful trust, that fear brings us to this course of action that is natural and gracious, and good and true. And all that is contrary to this is either wrong, or partly wrong.

[4] This then is the remedy, to know them both, and reject what is wrong, for the natural properties of fear that we have in this life through the gracious action of the Holy Spirit, the same it shall be in Heaven, before God, gentle, courteous, most sweet, and thus in love we shall be homely and near to God, and through fear we shall be gentle and courteous towards God, and both in this regard are alike.

[5] So let us desire of our Lord God to fear him reverently and love him meekly, and to trust him

[706] Julian refers to divine motherhood only once more in the LT at 83.3.

fully, for when we fear him reverently and love him meekly, our trust is never in vain, for the more we trust, and the more strongly we trust, the more we please and worship our Lord in whom we trust. And if we fail in this reverent fear and meek love, as God forbids we should, our trust shall at once be misguided for that time. And therefore we very much need to pray to our Lord that by his grace we may have this reverent fear and meek love, as his gift, in our hearts and in our deeds, for without it no man may please God.



CHAPTER 75

We need love, longing and pity, and of the three kinds of longing in God that are in us, and how on the Day of Doom the joy of the blessed shall be increased when they truly see the reasons for all the things that God has done, trembling in fear and thanking in joy, marvelling at the greatness of God and the littleness of all that is made

I saw that God may provide all that we need, and the three needs of which I shall now speak are love, longing and pity.[707] Pity and love preserve us in the time of our need. And longing is that same love drawing us into Heaven,[708] for the thirst of God is to have mankind in general come in to him, through which thirst he has drawn[709] his holy souls, souls that are now in bliss, so gathering his living members,[710] he is drawing always and drinking, and yet still he thirsts and longs.

---

[707] Following SLOANE. The connection between longing and pity was discussed at LT31.5.

[708] See Jn 6:44, 'No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day' (NRSV).

[709] God's thirst was also discussed in LT31.4–5. Watson and Jenkins point out that there is a pun on 'drawn', meaning both 'drawn towards himself' and 'taken a draught of'.

[710] There appears to be another pun here; 'living members' refers both to that body of humanity which comprises God's Church, and in this sense

[2] I saw three kinds of longing in God, and all to one end.[711] The first is that he longs to teach us to know him, and to love him always more and more, as is appropriate and beneficial for us. The second is that he longs to bring us up into our bliss that souls have when they are taken out of suffering and into Heaven. The third is to fill us with bliss, and that shall be fulfilled on the last day, and last forever. For I saw as it is known in our faith, that at that time suffering and sorrow shall be ended for all those who shall be saved.[712] And not only shall we receive the same bliss that souls before have had in Heaven, but we shall also receive a new bliss which shall flow abundantly out of God into us and fulfil us. And those are the goods that he has ordained to give us from before the beginning.[713]

---

those who are saved are 'members' of that Church; and 'members' also refers to God's metaphorical body – his limbs – which are formed by drawing in members of the Church, with reference to which the Church Creed features the 'body of Christ'.

[711] SLOANE adds *of which we have the same in us and of the same virtue and for the same end*. The longing is mutual, God's thirst for us, and our longing for God.

[712] *at that time* is a reference to the Day of Judgement.

[713] See Cor 2:9–10, 'But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" – these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God' (NRSV).

[3] These goods are treasured and hidden in himself,[714] for until that time, no creature is strong enough or worthy enough to receive them. In this we should truly understand the reason for all the deeds that God has done. And moreover, we shall see the cause of all the things that he has permitted,[715] and the bliss and the fulfilling shall be so deep, and so high, that all creatures ought to have for God so great a reverent fear surpassing what has been seen and felt before, that the pillars of Heaven shall tremble and quake.[716]

[4] But this type of trembling and fear shall hold

[714] See Matt 13:44, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field,' and Is 45:3, 'I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name' (NRSV).

[715] That is, we will have a full understanding of both God's *active will*, concerning the things that he actively brings about, and also his *permissive will*, concerning those things that he permits to happen, and with this new knowledge we will understand God's purpose in having us live our lives in a world where pain and sufferings and troubles are experienced by all of us. To encourage us to have the confidence that this vision will, eventually, come to us (and in some degree to describe the sort of content this vision will have) is perhaps the primary purpose of Julian's *Showings*.

[716] See Job 9:4–6, 'He [God] is wise in heart, and mighty in strength – who has resisted him, and succeeded? – he who removes mountains, and they do not know it, when he overturns them in his anger; who shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble,' and Ps 75:2–3, 'At the set time that I appoint I will judge with equity. When the earth totters, with all its inhabitants, it is I who keep its pillars steady' (NRSV).

no kind of suffering, because it is fitting that the noble majesty of God be seen in this way by his creatures, fearfully trembling and quaking for their fullness of joy, unendingly marvelling at the greatness of God the Maker and at the smallest part of all that is made,[717] for beholding this makes his creatures wonderfully meek and mild, therefore God wants us, because it is also fitting for us both by nature and by grace, to want to have knowledge of this, longing for that vision and that experience of him that leads us in the right way and sustains us in the true life, and unites us to God.

[5] And God is as great as he is good, and as much as it is fitting for his goodness to be loved, it befits his greatness to be feared. For this reverent fear is the fairest courtesy that is in Heaven, before God's face. And he shall then be feared far more than he is now by as much as he shall then be known and loved far more than he is now. Therefore it needs must be[718] that all Heaven and earth shall tremble and quake when the pillars shall tremble and quake.[719]

---

[717] Referring back to LT5.2–4 and the little thing as small as a hazelnut.

[718] Translating *Wherfore it behovyth nedys to be*.

[719] We may recall that the Gospel of Matthew reports that an earthquake occurred at the point Jesus died on the Cross: see Matt 27:51, 'At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split' (NRSV). Julian envisages such momentous events on the Day of Judgement, but instead of being filled with fear and terror, we will be overcome by the *fullness of joy*.

CHAPTER 76

A loving soul hates sin for its vileness more than all the sufferings of Hell, and how looking at another man's sin (unless it is done with compassion) prevents us from looking at God, and the Devil, by reminding us of our wretchedness would also prevent this, and of our sloth

I say very little about reverent fear, for I hope that it has been understood from what I have already said.[720] But well I know that our Lord showed me no souls who do not fear him, for well do I know that the soul that truly receives the teaching of the Holy Spirit hates sin for its vileness and hideousness more than it hates all the suffering that is in Hell. For the soul that sees the kindness of our Lord Jesus hates not Hell, but sin,[721] as I see it. And therefore it is God's wish that we recognise sin and pray in earnest and strive resolutely and humbly

[720] This present chapter expands the discussion of different sorts of sin, and continues in the three following chapters. Julian's mention of sin, together with some more focused attention, is scattered across the *Showings*; see LT4.3, 10.6, 11.1/4, 12.2, 15.3, 20.2, 27, 28.1/2, 29, 34.3, 35.4, 36.1/4/7, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43.1, 45.2, 46.3, 47.1–2/4, 48.1, 50.1–3, 51.9, 52.2/3/6, 53.1, 59.3, 61.3, 63.1–2, 66.3, 70.1/4/5–9, 71.5–9, 72.11, 73.2–4, 74.1, 76.1–2/4, 77.2, 78.1–3, 79.1–2, 80.4, 82.1–2.

[721] See LT40.3–4.

seek teaching so that we do not fall blindly into it, and if we fall, that we quickly get up. For the greatest pain that the soul may suffer is at any time to turn from God through sin.

[2] The soul that wishes to be at rest should when the sins of others come to mind, flee from it as from the sufferings of Hell, seeking from God help against it.[722] For in contemplating the sins of others, we make as it were a thick mist before the eye of the soul, and we may not for that time see the beauty of God, unless we regard the sins of others with sorrow for those who sin, and with compassion for them, and with a holy longing for God on their behalf, for without this, it disturbs and troubles and hinders the soul that observes them. For this is what I understood in the Showing regarding compassion.[723]

[3] In this blessed Showing of our Lord I understood two contrary things. One is the wisest thing that any creature may do in this life, and the other is the most foolish thing. The wisest thing is for

[722] See Matt 7:1–2, 'Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get,' and Lk 6:37–8, 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you' (NRSV).

[723] Julian is referring to the Thirteenth Showing. See LT28, 30.3 and 31.5.

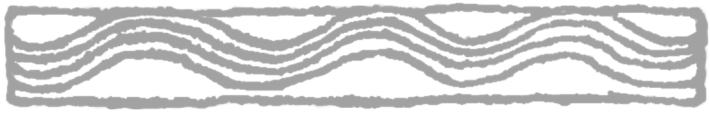
a creature to follow the wishes and the counsel of his greatest, supreme friend.[724] This blessed friend is Jesus, and it is his wish and counsel that we embrace him and bind ourselves intimately[725] to him, evermore, in whatever state we may be, for whether we be foul or clean, his love for us is always the same. For neither in joy nor sorrow does he ever want us to flee from him.

[4] But because of the changeability that we have in ourselves, we often fall into sin, and this happens because we are provoked by our Enemy and by our own folly and blindness, for they say, 'You know very well that you are a wretch, a sinner and also unfaithful, for you do not keep God's commandments and often promise our Lord that you shall do better, but you immediately fall again into the same condition, especially into sloth and wasting time.' For this is the beginning of sin, as I see it, and especially for those creatures who have given themselves to the service of our Lord through the inner contemplation of blessed goodness. And this makes us afraid to appear before our courteous Lord. At this point our Enemy will set us back with his

[724] See Jn 15:15, 'I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father' (NRSV).

[725] Translating *homely*.

false fear of our wretchedness, and the punishment he threatens us with, for it is his purpose to make us dejected and so grieved in this that we should let slip from our mind the blessed contemplation of our everlasting friend.



CHAPTER 77

Of the enmity of the Fiend who loses more by our rising than he gains by our falling, and so is scorned, and how the scourge of God should be borne with his Passion in mind, for that is especially rewarded above any penance that we may choose for ourselves, and we needs must have sorrow, but courteous God is our guide, guardian and bliss

Our good Lord showed the enmity of the Fiend, through which I understood that all that is contrary to love and to peace comes from the Fiend and his faction. And through our feebleness and our folly we needs must fall, and through the mercy and grace of the Holy Spirit we shall assuredly rise to greater joy. And if our Enemy profits in any way from us by our falling (for that is what he likes), he loses much more from our rising by love[726] and humility. And this glorious rising causes him such great sorrow and suffering, on account of the hate that he has for our souls, that he burns continually with envy.[727] And all this sorrow

[726] Translating *charyte*.

[727] In the tradition of this time, the rebellion of the fallen angels who were cast out of Heaven resulted specifically from their envy of humanity when Christ became human rather than one of their own kind, an angel. According to this view, some angels, led by Lucifer, rejected God's plan

that he would make us have, it shall turn upon himself. And it was for this that our Lord scorned him and showed that he shall be scorned, and this made me laugh heartily.[728]

[2] Here then is the remedy,[729] that we acknowledge our wretchedness and flee to our Lord. For the greater our need, the more advantageous it is for us to touch him. And let us remind ourselves and say, 'I know well that I have deserved suffering, for our Lord is almighty and may punish me severely. And he is all wisdom and can punish me wisely. And he is all goodness, and loves me tenderly.' And it is appropriate for us to dwell upon this observation. For there occurs a most admirable humility in a sinful soul, wrought by the mercy and grace of the Holy Spirit, when we willingly and gladly receive the scourging and the chastising that our Lord himself will give us. And this punishment shall be most gentle and most easily borne if we can only remain contented with him and with all that he does.

---

because it placed humans, who were created 'lower than the angels' (Ps 8:5), in a position of special honour through the Incarnation.

[728] This incident is recounted in LT13.4. From this point, Julian makes no further specific mention of the Devil.

[729] The remedy for the 'false fear of our wretchedness' (LT76.4).

[3] For that penance which people take upon themselves[730] was not shown to me, that is to say, it was not revealed to me specifically. But this was shown specifically and earnestly and with the most loving attitude, that we should meekly and patiently bear and suffer the penance that God himself gives us, recollecting his blessed Passion. For when we bear in mind his blessed Passion, with pity and love, then we suffer with him, as his friends did who saw it.

[4] And this was shown in the Thirteenth [Showing], near the beginning, where it speaks of pity,[731] for he says, 'Do not accuse yourself that your tribulation and your sorrow are all your own fault. For I do not wish that you be sad nor sorrowful unreasonably, for I tell you that whatsoever you do, you shall suffer sorrow. And therefore I want you to wisely recognise your penance[732] which you suffer continually, and that you meekly accept it as your penance. And then you shall truly see that your whole life is a profitable penance.' This world is a

[730] Julian is referring to ascetic mortifications, such as fasting, keeping vigil, self-scourging, the wearing of hair shirts, celibacy and other self-inflicted privations.

[731] Julian means to direct us to LT28. See also LT18.

[732] i.e., the sorrow just mentioned.

prison[733] and this life is a penance, and he wants us to find joy in the remedy.

[5] The remedy is that our Lord is with us, watching over us, and leading us into the fullness of joy, for our Lord intends this to be an unending joy for us, that he who shall be our bliss when we are there is our protector while we are here, our way and our Heaven, in true love and faithful trust. And this is the understanding I received from all [the Showings], and specifically in the Showing of his Passion where he made me resolutely choose him for my Heaven.[734] Flee to our Lord, and we shall be comforted. Touch him, and we shall be made clean.[735] Cleave to him, and we shall be secure and safe from all manner of perils.[736]

---

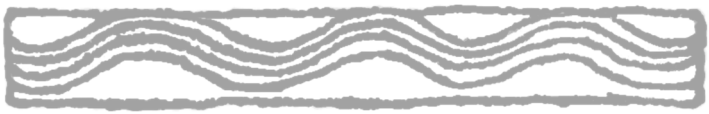
[733] Translating *This place is pryson.* Some commentators have wondered whether Julian means to refer to her anchorhold as a prison, but this seems doubtful, as she is addressing her readers in a completely general sense, in *their* situation, which is commonly shared by everyone.

[734] See LT19.

[735] Julian may be alluding to the account in the gospels (Matt 9:20–2 and Mk 5:25–34) in which a woman had such faith in Christ, she believed that by merely touching his clothing she would be healed. Some have identified this woman as Veronica, who has been mentioned above, in LT10.5. See Ps 51:2/7, 'Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'

[736] See Ps 73:28, 'But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, to tell of all your works' (NRSV).

[6] For our courteous Lord wishes that we be as homely with him as heart may think or soul may desire. But beware that we take not this homeliness so carelessly that we abandon courtesy, for our Lord himself is supreme homeliness, and as homely as he is courteous, for he is most courteous. And the blessed creatures that shall be in Heaven, with him, without end, he wants them to be like himself in all things, and to be like our Lord perfectly is our true salvation and complete bliss. And if we know not how we are to do these things, let us desire it of our Lord, and he shall teach us, for that is his own delight and his honour.[737] Blessed may he be!



[737] In his note, Fr John-Julian points out that as Julian progresses into her concluding chapters, her usual first-person perspective of 'I' and 'me', changes almost invariably to the inclusive, plural perspective of 'we' and 'us'.

CHAPTER 78

Our Lord wants us to recognise four kinds of goodness that he extends to us and how we need the light of grace to acknowledge our sin and feebleness, for we are nothing in ourselves but wretchedness, and we cannot know the horribleness of sin as it is, and how our Enemy wishes that we should never recognise our sin until the last day, therefore we are much obligated to God for showing it now

Our Lord in his mercy reveals to us our sin and our feebleness by his own sweet, gracious light, for our sin is so foul and so horrible that through his kindness he will not reveal it to us other than by the light of his mercy. It is his wish that we have knowledge of four things. The first is that he is the ground from whom we have our whole life and being. The second is that he cares for us intensely and mercifully throughout the time that we are subject to sin, beset by all our enemies who ruthlessly work against us, and all the more are we in greater peril because not knowing our own need we give them occasion for it.[738] The third is how courteously he cares for us and lets us know when we

[738] The phrasing in this sentence is very similar to the final sentence of LT39.4.

go amiss. The fourth is how steadfastly he waits for us with unchanging demeanour, for he wants us to turn to him and be united to him in love as he is to us.

[2] And so by this gracious knowing we may see our sin profitably, without despair. For we need to see it as it truly is, even though the sight of it shall make us feel ashamed of ourselves and break down our pride and our presumption. For we needs must see[739] that in ourselves we are nothing but sin and wretchedness. And so by seeing the lesser proportion of our sins that our Lord shows to us, the greater part that we do not see is dispelled, for in his kindness he measures out the sight for us, for it is so foul and so horrible that we should not endure to see it as it is. And thus, by this meek knowing, through contrition and grace, we shall be broken away from everything that is not our Lord. And then shall our blessed saviour perfectly cure us, and unite us to him.

[3] This breaking and this curing, our Lord intends for everyone generally, for those who are highest and nearest to God may see themselves sinful and needy alongside me. And I who am the least and the lowest of those who shall be saved, I may be comforted alongside those who are highest. So has our Lord

[739] Translating *For us behovyth verely to see.*

united us in love.[740] When he showed me that I would sin, because of the joy that I had in beholding him, I did not attend properly to that Showing,[741] and our courteous Lord paused at that point and would teach me nothing further until he had given me the grace and the will to pay attention. And here was I taught that although we may be lifted up high into contemplation through the special gift of our Lord, yet we needs[742] must also have knowledge and sight of our sin and of our feebleness, for without this knowledge we will not have true meekness, and without this we cannot be saved.

[4] And I saw also that we cannot acquire this knowledge by ourselves, nor from any of our spiritual enemies, for they do not work for us so much good, for if they could have their wish, we would never see it until the day of our ending.[743] Thus are we greatly beholden to God that he will of himself, out of love, show this[744] to us in time, through mercy and grace.

[740] Translating *charite*.
[741] LT37.1–2.
[742] Translating *yet us behovyth nedys*.
[743] i.e., until after we die.
[744] i.e., our sin and feebleness.

CHAPTER 79

We are taught our own sin, and not that of our neighbour unless it is to help them, and God wants us to know that whatever urge we may have contrary to this Showing, it comes from our Enemy, for knowing the great love of God we should not be more reckless about falling, and if we fall, we must hastily get up, or else we will be greatly discourteous to God

I also received a greater understanding of what I had been shown, that I would sin.[745] I had taken this to apply simply to my own unique case, for I was not at that time moved to think differently. But through the great and gracious comfort of our Lord that came later, I saw that he intended this for mankind in general, that is to say, for everyone who is sinful and shall be until the last day, amongst whom I number, as I hope by the mercy of God. For the blessed comfort that I saw, it is large enough for us all. And in this I was taught that I should regard only my own sin, and not that of others, unless it were for the comfort and help of my fellow Christians.

[745] In LT37.

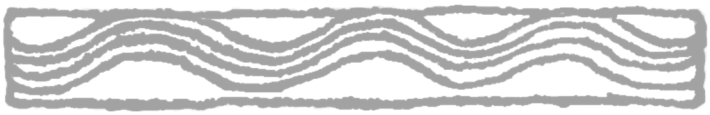
[2] And also in the same Showing[746] in which I saw that I would sin, there was I taught to be fearful on account of my own instability, for I do not know how I may fall, nor do I know the measure nor the greatness of my sin, for this is my fear that I wanted to learn about, but I received no answer. At the same time, our courteous Lord also revealed most sweetly and most powerfully his endless and unchangeable love, and also that through his great goodness and his grace protecting us within, his love shall never be separated from our souls, without end. And thus in this fear I have cause for humility that saves me from presumption, and in this blessed Showing of Love I have cause for true comfort and joy that saves me from despair.

[3] All of this homely Showing[747] of our courteous Lord is a lovely lesson and a sweet, gracious teaching from himself for comforting our souls, for he wants us to know, through the sweetness of his homely love that all that we see or feel, within or without, that is contrary to this comes from the Enemy, and not from God. Thus, if we have been moved to live or care for our hearts more recklessly because we have knowledge of this abundant love, then we need to be keenly aware that this stirring, if it comes, is false,

[746] This is *Showing* 13.

[747] Julian is referring to the entirety of the revelations.

and we ought to hate it resolutely, for it bears no resemblance to God's will. And when we have fallen through frailty or blindness, then our courteous Lord, touching us, moves us and cares for us. And then he wants us to see our own wretchedness and meekly to acknowledge it. But he does not want us to remain there, and he does not want us to concern ourselves greatly with self-accusation, and he does not want us to be vengeful towards ourselves. But he wants us to hastily attend to him, for he stands all alone and waits for us continually,[748] groaning and grieving until we come, impatient to have us with him, for we are his joy and his delight, and he is the remedy for our life. Where I say he stands all alone, I leave aside speaking of the blessed company of Heaven and speak of his function and his actions here on earth, with regard to the nature of the Showing.



[748] Christ's loneliness echoes that of the Servant when he fell (LT51.2), and that of the Lord when he is sitting alone in the wilderness (LT51.10/12), in the Lord and Servant allegory.

CHAPTER 80

Through three things God is worshipped and we are saved, and how our knowing is now but an A B C, and sweet Jesus does everything, waiting and grieving with us, but when we are in sin Christ grieves alone, then it is fitting for us out of kindness and reverence hastily to turn to him again

By three things is man sustained in this life, by which God is worshipped and we are helped, preserved and saved. The first is the use of man's natural reason. The second is the common teaching of Holy Church. The third is the inner, gracious working of the Holy Spirit, and these three all come from one God. God is the ground of our natural reason. And God is the teaching of Holy Church. And God is the Holy Spirit. And all are distinct gifts, and he wants us to have high regard for them and conform ourselves to them, for these work in us continually, all together, and they are very important things. He wants us to have knowledge, here, of this importance, as if it were an A B C.[749] That is to say, that we may have a little knowledge

[749] i.e., a basic primer, of the sort Julian would have known that teaches an introduction to reading, and perhaps also writing. The analogy has already been used at LT51.22.

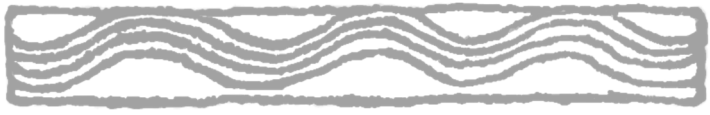
here, of what we shall know fully in Heaven, and this is for our benefit.

[2] We know that in our faith, God alone took our nature, and none but he. And furthermore, that Christ alone performed all the great works appropriate for our salvation, and none but he. And just so does he alone act now in these last times, that is to say, he dwells here in us and rules us and comforts us in this life, and brings us to his bliss. And this he shall do for as long as any soul remains on earth that shall come to Heaven, so much so that if there were no such souls on earth but one, he shall be with that one all alone until he has brought it up to his bliss.

[3] I believe and understand the ministration of holy angels, as scholars tell, but it was not shown to me. For he himself is nearest, and meekest, and highest and lowest, and does all. And not only all that we need, but he also does all that is honourable for our joy in Heaven. And when I say that he waits for us, groaning and grieving, that means that all the true feelings that we have in ourselves of contrition and compassion, and all groaning and grieving on account of our not being united with our Lord and all such that is beneficial, it is Christ in us. And though some of us feel it only seldomly, it never passes from Christ until the time that he has brought

us out of all our sorrow, for love allows him never to be without pity.

[4] And at those times that we fall into sin and leave off thinking about him and caring for our own soul, then Christ alone bears the burden for us. And thus he stands, groaning and grieving. Then it is appropriate for us, through reverence and kindness, to turn in haste to our Lord, and not let him be alone. He is here, alone within us all, that is to say, he is here only for us. And for those times that I am estranged from him through sin, despair or sloth, then I let my Lord stand alone, in as much as he is in me. And so it is for all of us who are sinners. And although we do this often, his goodness never lets us be alone, but he is with us always, and he tenderly excuses us, and always guards us from blame in his sight.



CHAPTER 81

The blessed woman saw God in a variety of ways, but she saw him take no resting-place other than in man's soul, and he wants us to rejoice more in his love than sorrow for our frequent falling, remembering our everlasting reward and living gladly in penance, and why God permits sin

Our good Lord showed himself to his creature[750] in various ways, both in Heaven and on earth, but I saw him take no place other than in man's soul.[751] He showed himself on earth in the sweet Incarnation and in his blessed Passion. And in other ways he showed himself on earth, as when I said, 'I saw God in an instant of time.'[752] And he showed himself in another way on earth, as if on a pilgrimage,[753] that is to say, he is here with us, leading us, and shall be, until that time when he has brought us all to his bliss in Heaven.

---

[750] i.e., to herself. By *creature*, Julian means simply that she is one of God's creations, something created. She uses the same expression at LT2.1 and throughout the *Showings*, referring either to the entirety of the human community or to individuals within it.

[751] The image of God's dwelling in each human soul occurs several times in the *Showings*. See LT48.1, 51.12, 52.4, 54.2, 55.3, 56.2, 57.4, 62.3, 71.8, 68.

[752] Translating *in a poynt*. See LT11.1.

[753] This analogy appears only here, in this single instance.

[2] On several occasions, he showed himself reigning, as I have said before.[754] But principally in man's soul is where he has taken his resting-place[755] and located his honourable city, from which honourable throne he shall never rise nor leave, without end. Marvellous and solemn is the place where the Lord dwells, and therefore he wants us to gladly attend to his gracious touch, rejoicing more in his complete love than lamenting our frequent fallings. For it is the greatest honour to him, more than anything else that we can do, that we live in our penance gladly and cheerfully because of his love. For he regards us so tenderly, that he sees all our living here to be penance,[756] for our natural longing for him is an enduring penance for us, and which hardship[757] he causes in us, and mercifully he helps us to bear it.

[3] For his love makes him long for us, and his wisdom and his truth, with his righteousness, cause him to wait patiently for us here, and he wants to see in us the same disposition. For this is our natural penance, and as I see it, the most noble, for this penance will never leave us until that time when we are fulfilled, when we shall have him as our reward. And therefore he wants us to set our hearts upon our

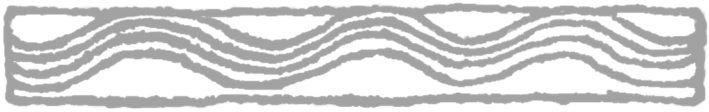
[754] In LT14.1.

[755] In contrast to *pilgrymage*.

[756] Repeating the notion from LT77.3–4.

[757] Translating *penannce*.

'passing over', that is to say, upon that passing from the pain that we suffer to the bliss in which we trust.



CHAPTER 82

God regards the grieving soul with pity and not with blame, and yet all we do is sin, and so we are kept in solace and in fear, for he wants us to turn to him and cleave readily to his love knowing that he is our medicine, and so we must live in longing and in joy, and whatsoever is contrary to this is not from God, but from the Enemy

But here our courteous Lord showed the groaning and grieving of our soul, meaning this, 'I know well that you will live for my love cheerfully, and gladly allowing all the suffering[758] that may come to you. But in as much as you live not without sin, thus are you sad and sorrowful, and if you could live without sin you would suffer for my love all the woe[759] that might come to you. But as true as this is, do not be too much distressed by sin that falls to you against your will.'

[2] And here I understood that the Lord regards the Servant with pity and not with blame, for this passing life[760] asks not that we live altogether without sin. He loves us endlessly, and we sin

[758] Translating *penawnce*.

[759] Sloane adds *and all the tribulation and misery*.

[760] More in the sense of transitory or fleeting than passing away.

habitually, and he shows it to us most tenderly. And then we befittingly sorrow and grieve, and we turn to contemplating his mercy, cleaving to his love and to his goodness, seeing that he is our medicine, knowing that we do nothing but sin. And thus by the humility that we gain from the sight of our sin, faithfully knowing his enduring love, thanking him and praising him, we please him.

[3] 'I love you and you love me, and our love shall never be split apart. And for your benefit, I suffer.'[761] And all this he showed in a spiritual understanding, saying these blessed words, 'I care for you most surely.'[762] And by the great desire that I saw in our blessed Lord that we live entirely in this manner, that is to say, in longing and rejoicing, as all this Lesson in Love shows, thereby I understood that all that is contrary to this is not from him, but from the Enemy. And he wants us to know this by the sweet, gracious light of his kind love.

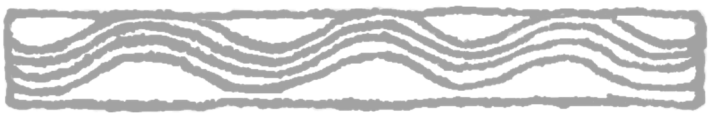
[4] If there is anyone living on earth who is continually kept from falling, I do not know of it,

[761] The speaker is Christ. The first sentence within the quotes is repeated from the end of LT58.2.

[762] *I kepe the full sykerly.* Cf. earlier instances, *I kepe the fulle suerly*, (LT37.2), and *I kepe the fulle truly*, (very end of LT40.4). *Kepe* means look after, care for, watch over, protect or preserve, support, provide for. It retains this meaning, for instance, in the expressions 'beekeeper', 'bookkeeper', 'shopkeeper'.

for it was not shown to me. But this was shown, that in falling and rising we are always tenderly protected in one love.[763] For in the sight of God we do not fall, but in our own sight we do not stand, and both of these are true, as I see it. But how our Lord God regards this is the higher truth. Thus are we much obliged to him that while in this life he wants to show us this high truth.

[5] And I understand that while we are in this life, it is most beneficial for us that we see both of these at once.[764] For the higher observation preserves us in spiritual joy and a true enjoyment of God. The other that is the lower observation maintains us in fear and makes us ashamed of ourselves. But our good Lord always wants us to hold much more to our understanding of the higher, and disregard as nothing our knowing of the lower, until that time when we are brought up above, where we shall have our Lord Jesus as our reward and be filled full with joy and bliss, without end.



[763] Following SLOANE. PARIS has *oure love*.

[764] i.e., at the same time.

CHAPTER 83

Of three properties of God, life, love and light, and that our reason is in harmony with God, that it is the highest gift, and how our faith is a light coming from the Father, measured out to us, leading through this night and to the end of our sorrow, suddenly our eyes shall be opened in the full light and clarity of vision, seeing our Maker, Father, and Holy Spirit in Jesus our Saviour

I could, to some degree, touch, see and feel three properties of God upon which the meaning and significance of the whole Revelation is based. And this was seen in every Showing, but most notably in the twelfth, where it says often, 'It is I.'[765] The properties are these: life, love and light.[766] In life there is marvellous homeliness. In love there is gentle courtesy. And in light there is endless kindness.

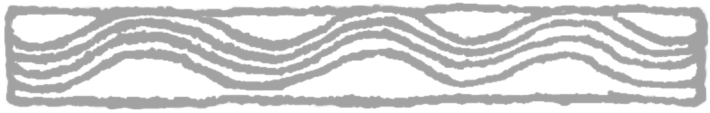
[2] These three properties were seen in one goodness, to which goodness my reason wished to be united and to cleave with all its strength. I beheld with reverent fear, greatly marvelling at the sight

[765] LT26.2, 59.2 and 60.4.

[766] See Jn 1:4, 'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind,' and Jn 8:12, 'When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."' (NIV).

and feeling of sweet harmony, that our reason is in God, understanding that it is the highest gift that we have received and that it is grounded in nature.[767]

[3] Our faith is a light naturally coming from our endless day, that is from our Father, God, in which light our Mother, Christ,[768] and our good Lord the Holy Spirit lead us in this passing life. This light is measured out discreetly and stands with us in the night according to our need. The light is the cause of our life. The night is the cause of our suffering and all our sorrow, in which sorrow we deserve unending reward and thanks from God. For we, through mercy and grace, gladly know and trust our light, following it wisely, with all our strength. And at the end of sorrow, suddenly our eyes shall be opened and in the full light our sight shall be clear, which light is God our Maker, Father and Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus, our Saviour. Thus, I saw and understood that our faith is our light in our night, which light is God, our endless day.



[767] See LT56.4.

[768] This is the last reference that Julian makes to divine motherhood.

CHAPTER 84

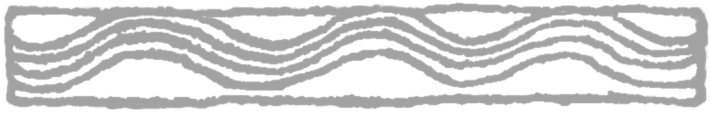
This light is love,[769] *which is not so little that it does not, because it is beneficial when put to use, deserve the unending, honourable thanks of God, for faith and hope lead us to love, which has three kinds*

This light is love,[770] and the apportioning of this light is done to benefit us, through God's wisdom. For the light is neither so large that we may see clearly our blessed day, nor is it all completely shut off from us, but it is such a light by which we may live with merit, through effort, deserving of the honourable thanks of God. And this was shown in the Sixth Showing where he says, 'I thank you for your service and for your hard labour.'[771] Thus love[772] preserves us in faith and in hope. And faith and hope lead us in love.[773] And at the end, all shall be love.

[2] I had three kinds of understanding regarding this light of love. The first is love uncreated. The second is love created. The third is love given. Love

[769] Translating *charite*.
[770] Translating *charite*.
[771] Repeated from LT14.1.
[772] Translating *charite*.
[773] Translating *charite*.

uncreated is God. Love created is our soul in God. Love[774] given is virtue.[775] And this is a way of working, graciously given, in which we love God for himself, and ourselves in God, and all that God loves, for his sake.



[774] Translating *charite*.

[775] Translating *vertu*, conceived of as that power, capacity or ability to function (hence *wurkying* in the next sentence) as God intends.

CHAPTER 85

God has loved his chosen since before the beginning, and he never allows them to be harmed such that their bliss might be lessened, and how mysteries now hidden in Heaven shall be known, such that we shall bless our Lord for everything being so well ordained

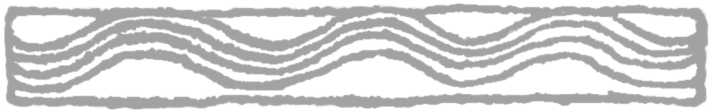
And at this sight[776] I marvelled greatly. For notwithstanding our foolish living and our blindness here, yet endlessly our courteous Lord regards us at our labours,[777] rejoicing. And of all things, we may please him best by wisely and truly believing it, and by rejoicing with him and in him. For as surely as we shall be in God's bliss without end, praising him and thanking him, as surely have we been in God's foresight, loved and known in his endless purpose from before the beginning, in which enclosing love he made us, and in the same love he cares for us and never permits us to be hurt by which our bliss might be lessened.

[2] And therefore, when the judgement is given and we shall all be brought up above, then shall we clearly see in God the mysteries that are now hidden

[776] The light of God's love, introduced above, LT84.1.

[777] Translating *wurkyng*.

from us.[778] And then shall none of us be stirred to say regarding any matter, 'Lord, if it had been thus, it would have been well.' But we shall all say with one voice, 'Lord, blessed may you be, for it is thus, and it is well. And now we see truly that all things are done as you ordained, before anything was made.'



[778] This is presumably a reference to God's 'great deed' that features in LT32.3–5.

CHAPTER 86

The good Lord showed that this book should be completed differently[779] *from how it was first written, and for his deeds he wants us to pray thus, thanking him, trusting and rejoicing in him, and how he made this Showing because he wants to have it known, in which knowing he will give us grace to love him, for fifteen years later came the answer that the cause of all this showing was love, which Jesus may grant us. Amen*

This book was begun by God's gift and by his grace, but it is not yet completed, as I see it. For the sake of love[780] let us all join together, inspired by God, thanking, trusting, rejoicing. For this is how our good Lord wants to be prayed to, from the understanding that I received from all that he conveyed, and in all the sweet words where he says most merrily, 'I am the ground of your beseeching.'[781] For truly I saw and understood that

---

[779] '... *should be completed differently from how* ...' wholly misinterprets Julian's opening sentence below; '*not yet completed*' may be conjectured to represent Julian's hope for how her *Showings*, conceived as an on-going live project, will touch the lives of countless Christian's in forthcoming centuries.

[780] Translating *charyte*.

[781] See LT41.2.

this is what our Lord intended to show, for he wants this better known than it is, in which knowing he will give us grace to love him and cleave to him, for he beholds his heavenly treasure[782] / with so much love while we are here on earth that he wants to give us more light[783] /[784] and solace in heavenly joy, by drawing our hearts away from the sorrow and darkness we are in.

[2] And from the time that it was shown, I often longed to know what our Lord meant by it. And over fifteen years later,[785] I was answered in my spiritual understanding when he said, 'What, would you know your Lord's meaning[786] in this thing? Know it well. Love was his meaning.[787] Who showed it to you? Love. / What did he show you? Love. /[788] Why does he show it to you? Out of love. Hold yourself to

[782] i.e., humanity.

[783] This is the light of Christian faith discussed in LT83.3.

[784] / This phrase / is added from SLOANE.

[785] Presumably in 1388 and after. See LT2.1, where Julian gives the date of her original revelatory experiences, when she was ill, as May 1373. Cf. LT51.8, where Julian refers to a period of *twenty years*, or fifteen years if we follow SLOANE.

[786] *menyng*, meaning, in the sense of purpose or intention (as in 'Did you mean to do that?'). Theologically, this refers to the manner in which God creates and holds the world in its being.

[787] Translating *mening*, purpose, intention; present in modern English in such expressions as 'What do you mean by doing that?' 'She is very well meaning,' 'I mean to be there by four.'

[788] / Added from SLOANE /

this, and you shall know more of the same. But you shall never know in this anything different, without end.'

[3] Thus was I taught that love is our Lord's meaning. And I saw most surely in this, and in everything, that before God made us he loved us,[789] which love has never lessened nor ever shall. And in this love he has done all his works. And in this love he has made all things beneficial for us. And in this love, our life is everlasting. In our making, we have a beginning, but the love by which he made us was in him from before the beginning, in which love we have our beginning. And all this shall we see in God without end.

[4] Thanks be to God.[790]

Here ends the Book of the Revelations of Julian, anchoress of Norwich, upon whose soul may God have mercy.[791]

✠

Both SLOANE 2499 and SLOANE 3705 conclude with the following postscript which does not appear in PARIS —

[789] Repeated from LT53.5.

[790] Translating the Latin, *Deo gracias.*

[791] Translating the Latin, *Explicit liber revelacionum Julyane anatorite Norwyche, cuius anime propicietur Deus.* (Text of LT86.4 added by a later scribe or editor.)

I pray Almyty God that this book com not^but to the hands of them that will be his faithfull lovers, & to thoſe þt will ſubmitt them to þe feith of Holy Church, & obey the holeſom Vnderſtondyng & teching of þe men that be of vertuous life, ſadde Age, & profound lerning: ffor this Revelation is hey Divinitye, & hey wiſdam, wherfore it may not dwelle with him that is thrall to ſynne & to the Devill. And beware þ^u take not on thing after thy affection & liking & leve another, for that is þ^e Condition of an heretique. But take every thing with other, & trewly Vnderſtonden all is according to holy ſcripture & growndid in the ſame, & that Jhesus our very love light & truth ſhall ſhew to all clen ſoules that with mekenes aſke perſeverantly this wiſdom of hym. And thou to whome this booke ſhall come thanke heyley & hertily our ſavior Criſt Ihesu that He made theſe ſhewings & revelations for the, & to the, of his endles love, mercy & goodnes for thine & our ſave guide & Conduct to ever leſting bliſs; the which Ihesus mot Grant us. Amen.

— which in SLOANE 3705 is followed by this —

Here end the Sublime & wonderful
Revelations of y^e^ unutterable Loue
of God in Jesus X^t^, vouchsafed to
a Dear Lover of his & in her
to all his dear friends &
Lovers, whose hearts, like
hers, do flame in
y^e^ Loue of our
Dearest
Jesu.

This engraving appears as the frontispiece of Tyrrell's 1902 reissuing of Cressy's edition of the *Revelations*, showing St Julian's Church in Norwich as it was in the 19th century, complete with its round tower that was destroyed in a German air raid in 1942. Julian's anchorhold had already disappeared by this time, presumably left to decay before being demolished after the Reformation.

A VISION

The translation of Julian's Short Text offered in this edition is based on its sole surviving witness, AMHERST 37790, a 15th-century devotional anthology now in the British Library (viewable at bit.ly/3D0bLD5). Since its first publication by Harford in 1911, the standard scholarly consensus understands this text to be a concise record produced soon after Julian's revelations of May 1373. Our interpretation rejects this reading. Our reassessment of the manuscript evidence and placing it into its historical context invite caution. Amherst's rubric which dates the text to 1413, refers to Julian in the third person, and presents the work not as an authorial composition but as a record of her showings – features that are more consistent with editorial redaction than with an early autobiographical draft.

The Short Text's theological profile also raises questions about its relationship to the fuller Long Text. Several of Julian's most distinctive and potentially controversial teachings – such as the Christ-as-Mother theology, the Lord and Servant parable, and her far-reaching reflections on salvation – are absent. These omissions, along with the added disclaimer in ST6.4 – 'For I am a woman, uneducated, feeble and frail' – align closely with the pressures exerted on vernacular religious writing after Arundel's Constitutions (1407–1409).

For these reasons, amongst others, we believe that the Short Text represents not an early draft but a later, cautious redaction, shaped to ensure the safe transmission of Julian's Showings in a climate of ecclesiastical constraints and strict scrutiny.

See Appendix 2 for a fuller exposition of these remarks.

Here is a vision shown by the goodness of God to a devout woman, and her name is Julian, who is yet still alive in the year of our Lord 1413, a recluse at Norwich, in which vision are very many comforting and greatly stirring words for all those who desire to love, and be loved by Christ.

One

I *desired three gifts by God's grace*. The first was to experience Christ's Passion.[792] The second was to suffer bodily sickness. And the third was to receive God's gift of three wounds. [LT2.1][793]

[2] Regarding the first, I thought I could in my devotions, to a *great* extent, imagine the Passion of Christ. Yet through the grace of God, I desired to have more. My thought was really to have been there [at the Crucifixion] with Mary Magdalene[794] and the

[792] i.e., Christ's suffering and death. Imagining oneself present at the events of Christ's Passion to re-live them in one's own devotional meditation was much approved and encouraged throughout this period. [For the convenience of the reader, the footnotes that apply to *Showings of Love* are duplicated at the appropriate places in *A Vision*.]

[793] References to LT locations after paragraphs in ST indicate where the source texts are to be found in LT – essentially 'cut-and-paste' into ST.

[794] Mary Magdalene, three of the Gospels tell us (Matt 27:56, Mk 15:40, Jn 19:25) was present at the Crucifixion, and was to bring the news of Christ's resurrection to the disciples (Mk 16:1–10, Jn 20:1-29). In the

others who loved him, to see with my own eyes the Passion that our Lord suffered for me, so that I might suffer with him, as did the others who loved him. **Nevertheless, I fully believed all the torments of Christ, as Holy Church shows and teaches (together with the paintings of the Crucifixion that are made by the grace of God, following the teachings of Holy Church, showing the likeness of Christ's Passion as far as man's skill may show); notwithstanding all this true belief,**[795] I desired to see with my own eyes, the better to understand our Saviour's bodily torments, and the Compassion of Our Lady, and of all those who truly loved him *who saw his suffering at that time and remembered it afterwards*.[796] I wanted to be one of them, and to have suffered with them. I had no desire for any other sight or showing from

devotional tradition of Julian's time, the focus on Mary Magdalene stressed her weeping at the Crucifixion. Medieval western Christian tradition identified Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus, with Mary Magdalene (Jn 11:1) and in Lk 10:38–42, this Mary is approved of by Jesus for sitting at his feet and listening to him, instead of joining with Martha in preparing and serving food. In ST17.3, Julian includes Mary Magdalene with others as an example of those who led pious lives and whose sins brought no shame upon them.

[795] Much of the text taken from LT appears entirely unaltered in ST – essentially 'cut-and-paste', as suggested above. Text unique to ST appears in **bold type**.

[796] Obvious paraphrases, sometimes extensive, are specified using *italic type*. Minor variations are not indicated. For a detailed, analytical presentation of *A Vision*, see the edition by Watson and Jenkins (2006).

God, until my soul should depart my body, *for I believed firmly I would be saved*. Such was my intent, because I desired that through this Showing I may more truly understand the Passion of Christ. [LT2.2]

[3] The second gift that I desired came to mind with sorrow,[797] freely, without any effort to seek it on my part, a willing desire to have from God the gift of a bodily sickness. I wanted that illness to bring me to the brink of death, so that in my sickness I could receive the Last Rites of Holy Church,[798] believing that I was about to die, and likewise, that all those with me might suppose the same. I wished for no manner of fleshly or earthly comfort, but I desired in my sickness to undergo all manner of bodily and spiritual suffering that would come to me were I to be dying, and I wanted even to experience those fears and torments inflicted by Fiends,[799] and all manner

[797] Translating *contricion*.

[798] The 'last rites' in the Catholic tradition do not constitute a single sacrament in itself, but is rather a set of sacraments given to people who are understood to be close to death. These are the sacraments of Penance (confession), then Anointing (application of oil), then Viaticum (Latin meaning 'provisions for a journey', from *via*, meaning 'way' – the rite of communion when performed for the dying person).

[799] It was widely accepted at this time that those dying would be attended by demons and other servants of Satan, whose purpose was to intimidate and persuade the dying person to renounce their faith. Julian has her own experiences of this deathbed visitation which she recounts in ST21.5 and 23.3–4 (see LT67 and 69), when the 'Fiend' himself appears to her twice.

of other pains, save only the passing out of my soul.[800] And I hoped also that it would prepare me for when I really should die, for I desired soon to be with my God and Maker.[LT2.3]

[4] These two desires, regarding the Passion and the sickness, *I desired them* with a condition (for I thought they *went beyond the usual habit* of prayer), and I said, 'Lord, you know what I would want, were it your will that I might have it granted to me – and if it is not your will, good Lord, do not be displeased, for I want only what you want.' (In my youth I desired to have this sickness when I was thirty years old.)[801] [LT2.4]

[5] For the third gift, **I heard a man of Holy Church tell the story of Saint Cecilia,[802] in the telling of which I understand that she received three wounds in the neck from a sword, from whose painful torment she died. By the stirring of this story** I conceived a strong desire, *and prayed to our Lord God*

[800] That is, she wanted to have a complete experience of dying without actually dying.

[801] Some commentators remark that Julian's interest in the age of thirty attaches to the tradition that Jesus began his ministry at that very age.

[802] Saint Cecilia is one of the most famous of the Roman martyrs, who when put to death, after being struck three times on the neck with a sword, lived for a further three days, at which point she asked the pope to convert her home into a church. The rood screens of East Anglian churches were commonly decorated with paintings of St Cecilia during this period (Fr John-Julian 1988, 68).

that he grant me at some point in my lifetime three wounds, that is to say, the wound of contrition, the wound of compassion, and the wound of deep longing for God. As I asked for the first two gifts with a condition, so I asked for the third without any condition. The first two desires passed from my mind, but the third has remained, present continually.]LT2.5]

Two

And when I was thirty and a half *winters* old, God sent me a bodily sickness in which I lay three days and three nights. And on the fourth night I received all the Rites of Holy Church,[803] believing that I would not live to see daybreak. And after that, I languished a further two days and two nights, and often on the third night I believed I would die,[804] as did those who were with

[803] She means the Last Rites.

[804] We can make the arithmetic of this sentence work only by following the suggestion from Watson and Jenkins in their note to this section, by counting days in the manner of a liturgical calendar, which takes any one day as beginning on *the evening of the previous day*. On this timetable, Julian falls ill on the evening of 7 May, the Last Rites are administered on the night of 10/11 May, and the curate she mentions in just a moment is called for on the night of 12/13 May, allowing for her *Vision* to commence on the morning of the 13th, some short while after sunrise.

me.[805] *Yet in this I felt most sorry and loath to die,* not because there was anything on earth that I wanted to live for, for there was *nothing* of which I was afraid, for I trusted in God, but because I wanted to have lived [in order] to have loved God better and for a longer time, so that I might by the grace of that living have known a greater love of God in the bliss of Heaven. I wondered whether all the time I had lived here, being so little and so short[806] in relation to God's unending bliss, meant that my ceasing to live, good Lord, would be to your honour. And I *was answered,* both in my reason and through my experience of pain, that I was about to die. And I assented completely to the will of my heart being one with God's will. [LT3.1–2] [2] Thus I endured till daybreak, though by then my body was dead to all feeling from the waist down. Then I wanted to sit

[805] Some commentators have remarked that the fact that Julian reports that she had a group of people to attend to her throughout her illness suggests that she could not at this stage already have taken up her life enclosed as an anchoress. However, it seems troubling to think that the rules of enclosure would not have been suspended at least for the days of an anchorite's final illness, or that the sick person would not, at least on some occasions, have been relocated to a family home, or taken to a hospital. The fact that she was attended neither supports nor undermines the claim that Julian was already living in her anchorhold at the age of thirty.

[806] See Job 14:1–2, 'A mortal, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, comes up like a flower and withers, flees like a shadow and does not last' (NRSV).

upright, *and I leant back with my head against the bedclothes*, so that my heart might be free to await God's will, thinking of him while I was still alive. *And those who were with me sent for my curate*[807] to be present at my end. **He came, and a child with him, and brought a cross,** by which time my eyes had turned up and I could no longer speak. *This person* set the cross before my face, and said, '**Daughter,** I have brought the image of your Saviour for you to look upon and be comforted **in reverencing him who died for you and for me.'**[808] It seemed to me that I was all right as I was, with my eyes fixed, looking up towards Heaven, where I trusted I would soon go. [LT3.2–3] [3] Nevertheless, I assented to turn my gaze upon the face of the crucifix, if I could, **to hold out for longer until the time of my ending,** for I thought I might be able to better endure looking straight ahead than looking upwards. [LT3.3]

[4] After this, my sight began to fail, and it grew all dark about me in the room, **as gloomy** as if it had been night, save only for the image of the cross, upon which fell an ordinary light – how, I did not know.

---

[807] *Curate* in Julian's time refers to anyone in religious orders.

[808] By *cross*, Julian in fact means the crucifix that bears a little image of Christ, cast in metal or carved in wood, of the sort we have to this day. She will use the term *crucyfix* in the next paragraph, showing that in her time the terms were interchangeable.

Everywhere around the cross was ugly to me, as if it were occupied by Fiends. [LT3.3]

[5] After this, the top part of my body began to die, *and lose all feeling.* **My hands fell down on either side, and through weakness my head drooped over to one side.** *The most pain that I felt* resulted from shortness of breath. My life was now failing, and I really believed *that I was at the point of death.* And then suddenly, all my pain was *taken away* from me, and I was as *altogether* well – especially in the upper part of my body – as I ever was before or **afterwards.** I marvelled at this change, thinking that it was a mysterious work of God, and not natural. And yet, although I felt relief, I still did not expect to live, for the relief I felt was not complete, and I thought I would rather have been delivered of this world, for my heart had willingly accepted it. [LT3.3–4]

Three

Then I suddenly realised that I should entreat our Lord for the second wound of his gift, that by his grace my body might be filled with an awareness and sense of his blessed Passion, for which I had prayed before. For I wanted his suffering to be my suffering, and to feel then with compassion my longing for God. Thus, I thought that I might, through his grace, have *his* wounds that I had before

desired. In all this, I had no desire for an actual vision or showing of God, but for the compassion that I thought a kind soul might have for our Lord Jesus, who for love became a mortal man. I desired to suffer with him whilst living in my own mortal body, if God would give me grace. [LT3.5] [2] And in this [Vision], I suddenly saw the red, hot and fresh-flowing and copious blood running down from under the crown, just as it did, **I thought,** at the time when the crown of thorns was *thrust* onto his blessed head,[809] when he who was both God and man[810] had in this way suffered for me. I had the strong belief that it was he himself who showed this to me, by some direct means.[811] [LT4.1][3] And I said, 'Blessed be the Lord,'[812] saying it reverently, with intent, in a loud voice, and I was overwhelmed by the wonder of it, and marvelled that he would be so *humble*

---

[809] See Matt 27:29, '...and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head' (NRSV).

[810] Alluding to the Incarnation, which is the major doctrine distinguishing Christianity from Judaism and Islam.

[811] Translating *it was himselfe that schewyd it me, with outyn any meenn*. She intends to inform her reader that this teaching came to her from God directly, and not through the Church, scripture, theological reasoning, and so forth.

[812] Translating the Latin *Benedicite Dominus*. This alludes to the greeting exchanged between Benedictine monks, when the junior of the two requests a blessing of the senior. JUNIOR: Benedicite. (Bless me.) SENIOR: Dominus te benedicat. (May the Lord bless you.)

towards a sinful creature living in this wretched flesh. [LT4.3]

[4] Thus I understood at that time that our Lord Jesus, through his courteous love would comfort me before the time of my temptation, for I thought that by the will of God and under his keeping, I might well be tempted by Fiends before I died.[813] With this vision of the blessed Passion and the Godhead that I saw in my understanding, I *saw* that here was strength enough for me (and for all others who shall be saved) to stand against all the Fiends of Hell, and against all other spiritual enemies. [LT4.3]

Four

At the same time that I saw this *bodily sight,* our Lord showed **me** a spiritual sight of his homely loving. I saw that to us he is everything that is good and comforting that helps us. He is our clothing that wraps us in love, winding about us, embracing us, enfolding us, draping his love upon us so tenderly that he will never leave us.

[813] *feendys*, fiends: the Middle English term for demons or evil spirits. Christians at this time believed that the Devil and his Fiends could assail the faithful with temptations, doubts, or terrors, especially near death, seeking to draw the soul away from trust in God in someone's last moments.

And so in this vision, as far as I understand it, I saw **truly** that he is everything that is good. [LT5.1]

[2] And in this vision he showed **me**[814] a little thing, the size of a hazelnut,[815] lying in the palm of my hand which, *to my understanding* was as round as any ball. I looked upon it, and thought, 'What can this be?' And I was answered, thus: 'It is all that is made.' I marvelled how it could continue to exist, for it was so little that it seemed to me it might suddenly disappear. And in my understanding, I was answered, 'It exists and ever shall, because God loves it,' and so all things have their being through the love of God.[816] [LT5.2]

---

[814] In LT, this is simply 'he showed a little thing', whereas ST inserts the personal pronoun 'me'. Across the rest of ST, 'me/to me/for me' are inserted at frequent intervals. Whoever created ST wished to modify the source text (LT) in this way for some specific reason, rhetorically reinforcing the text's core theme: that divine love, while universal, is received and must be understood as intimately personal and directed to the individual soul. This difference between the two texts suggests the presence of two voices: one in LT being Julian, and another in ST being someone else, possibly working with Julian, but perhaps not. We find instances of 'me/to me/for me' at ST4.2, 5.4, 6.1, 8.2–4, 9.1/4/5, 10.3/5, 12.3/4, 13.3/4/5/10, 16.1/3, 17.1/2/3, 19.1/6, 20.6, 22.4, 23.3/6, 24.1/2.

[815] See Wisdom 11:22, 'Because the whole world before you is like a speck that tips the scales, and like a drop of morning dew that falls on the ground' (NRSV). The hazelnut was used in recipes written at this period as a measurement for a small amount.

[816] The existence of the world and of everything in it is sustained and maintained by the action of God's love for each and every little thing.

[3] In this little thing I saw three properties: the first is that God made it, the second that God loves it, the third that God takes care of it. But what I should truly understand by Maker, *Lover and Carer*, I cannot tell, for until I am united[817] in substance with him, I may never have complete rest nor true happiness – that is to say – not until I am so bound to him that nothing in existence can come between my God and me. **And who shall do this deed?**[818] **Truly, himself, by his mercy and his grace, for this he has made me, and blessedly restored me.** [LT5.3]

[4] And then he brought our Lady to my understanding. Her physical form I saw spiritually, a meek and simple maiden, young of age, appearing to me as she would have been when she conceived. God also showed me part of the wisdom and truth of her soul, so that I could see the reverence with which she beheld her God and Maker, marvelling with great reverence that he had chosen to be born of her, a simple creature of his making. (For this was her marvelling, that he who was her Maker would be born of her who was made.) And this wisdom and truth, this knowing the greatness of her Maker and

---

God is thus present and active always and everywhere in his creation. This is a crucial aspect of Julian's theology.

[817] Translating *aned*, 'oned', making a verb of the noun 'one', meaning 'made one with'.

[818] i.e., the binding.

the littleness of her own standing, moved her to say meekly to the angel Gabriel, 'Behold me here, God's handmaiden.'[819] Through this vision I saw truly that she is more worthy and more fulfilled than anything else that God made beneath her, for above her God made nothing save only the blessed manhood of Christ. [LT4.4]

[5] This little thing that is made, **that is beneath our Lady, Saint Mary,[820] God showed it to me as little as if it had been a hazelnut.** I thought it might disappear for being so small. [LT5.4]

[6] **In this blessed revelation, God showed me three nothings,[821] of which this [small thing[822]] is the first that was shown to me.** *Every man and woman who* **desires to live contemplatively** needs to know this, and judge as nothing all things that are made in order to *have the love of God*, who is unmade. For this

[819] Luke 1:38. Gabriel is the archangel whom God sent to Mary to tell her that she will conceive a son whose name will be Jesus (Lk 1:31). In Judaism, Gabriel appears in the Book of Daniel (8:1–6 and 9:2–1), and in Islam Gabriel is the Angel of Revelation through whom the Qur'an was revealed to the prophet Muhammad.

[820] The description of the little thing in LT5.2–4 makes no reference to Mary.

[821] Translating *noughtes*, 'nothing', something of no value, worthless; powerless, ineffectual. The first 'nothing' is all that is created, and the other two, presumably, are sin (ST8.2) and the 'Fiend', i.e., Satan (ST8.4).

[822] i.e., the small thing, the size of a hazelnut, introduced above at ST4.2.

is the cause *of their being preoccupied wilfully with earthly business and forever seeking worldly goods,* lacking in peace in heart and soul. For *they love and seek* their rest here, in these things that are so little,[823] where there can be no rest, knowing nothing of God, that he is Almighty, all Wise and all Good,[824] for he is true rest. God wishes to be known, and he likes us to rest in him. For nothing that is beneath him is sufficient for us. Here is the cause as to why no soul can be at rest until it thinks as nothing all things that are made. When a soul sets all at nothing for love, to have him who is all **that is good**, then is he able to receive spiritual rest. [LT5.4–5]

Five

And at the same time as he showed to my spiritual sight what I have just described, my physical vision continued with that copious bleeding from the head. [LT7.2]

[2] And for as long as I saw this vision, *I said repeatedly,* 'Blessed be the Lord.'[825] [LT8.1]

[3] *In this First Showing of our Lord, I saw in my understanding six things.* [LT8.1]

---

[823] She means 'worthless'.

[824] The attributions of power, wisdom and goodness are traditionally assigned to the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

[825] Translating the Latin *Benedicite dominus*. See note to ST3.3.

The first, the copious shedding of his precious blood, is a token of the blessed Passion. [LT8.2]

Second, the Maiden, *that she* is his most dear Mother. [LT8.2]

Third, the blessed Godhead always was, is, and shall be, all-powerful, all-wisdom and all-love. [LT8.2]

Fourth, God has made all things, for well do I know that Heaven and earth and all that is made, is great, beautiful, large and good,[826] though it appeared so small in my eyes because I saw it in the presence of him who is the Maker. For a soul that sees the Maker of all things, all that is made seems by comparison remarkably small.[827] [LT8.2]

Fifth, he made all things, and made them out of love, and by this same love are they sustained, and shall be, without end, as was said before.[828] [LT8.2]

---

[826] In using these four adjectives, Julian means to tell us that God's creation is extensive, having abundant contents that are pleasing to the eye and agreeable to all the senses, and are in all other respects excellent, beneficial and valuable.

[827] This sentence appear to to be a direct quotation from *St Gregory's Life of St Benedict*, which for some commentators suggests a connection between Julian and the Benedictine Priory at Carrow which owned St Julian's Church, the site of her anchorhold (Pelphrey 2012, 11).

[828] i.e., in the previous paragraph and ST4.2, above.

Sixth, that God is everything that is good, and that he is the goodness that all things have.[829] [LT8.2]

[4] And all this our Lord showed **me** in the first vision, giving me space and time to understand it. And as the physical vision ended, my spiritual vision stayed in my understanding. And I waited in reverent awe, delighting in what I saw, daring to desire to see more, if this were his will, or at least to have the same vision last a longer time. [LT8.3]

Six

All that I say of myself I say on behalf of all my fellow Christians, for I was taught in the spiritual showing of our Lord that this is what he means, and therefore I urge you all for God's sake, and counsel you for your own advantage, to leave off attending to *the unhappy, sinful creature* to whom it was shown, and eagerly, wisely, **lovingly** and meekly understand that God, who out of his courteous love and endless goodness would show it *to everyone through this vision* for the comfort of us all. **And you who hear and see this vision and this teaching that comes from Jesus Christ for the**

[829] Julian means to emphasise that good things do not just reflect, manifest or somehow partake of God's goodness, *but are in their very essence God himself*. He is one and the same as all things good. See the note by Fr John-Julian to LT8 of the *Showings*.

edification of your soul, it is God's wish **and my desire** that you take it with great joy and delight, just as if Jesus had shown it to each of you, **as he did to me.** [LT8.5]

[2] It is not for the fact that I had this Showing that makes me a good person, but my loving God the better, **and so may and so should each man who sees it and hears it with a good will and a true intent. And so it is my desire that to every such man it should afford the same benefit that I desired for myself, to which I was moved by God the first time that I saw it, for it is common and general,** *for we are all one,* **and I am sure I saw it in order that many others may benefit.** To be sure, it was not shown to me because God loves me more than the most insignificant soul that receives his grace. For I am sure there are *so* many, who never had a showing or a vision but only the common teaching of Holy Church, who love God better than I. For if I consider myself as a mere individual, I am clearly nothing. But in general, I am united[830] in love[831] with all my fellow Christians. For upon this uniting depends the life of all who shall be saved. For God is all that is good, and God has made all that is made, and God loves all that he has made. **And if any man or**

[830] Julian uses the expression *oned*, using the noun 'one' as a verb.
[831] Translating *cheryte*, charity.

woman withdraws their love from any of their fellow Christians, they love not at all, because they do not love everyone. And so for that time, they are not saved, for they are not at peace. And he who loves all his fellow Christians, loves all that is.[832] For when he saves mankind, I understand [that he will save] all, that is, all that is made, even the Maker of all. For God is in us, *and in man is everything.* And thus he who *universally*[833] *loves all his fellow Christians,* loves all. **And he who loves thus, is saved.** [LT9.1–2]

[3] **And thus I wish to love, and thus I do love, and thus I am saved – I mean this on behalf of all my fellow Christians – and the more I love with this kind of love, while I am here, the closer I approach the unending bliss that I shall have in Heaven, and this is God, who from his endless love would become our brother and suffer for us.** *And I am sure that* those who regard it so shall be truly taught and greatly comforted, if they need comfort. [LT9.2]

[4] **But God forbid that you should say or take it that I am a teacher! For I do not mean to be, nor did I ever mean to be. For I am a woman, uneducated, feeble and frail. But I know well, this that I say, that I have it from the showing of him who is supreme**

[832] See 1 Jn 4:7–8, 'Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love' (NRSV).
[833] Translating *generalye.*

teacher. But in truth, love[834] stirs me to tell it to you. For I wish God to be known, and that my fellow Christians be helped (which is what I wish for myself) all the more to hate sin and love God. Because I am a woman, should I therefore believe that I should not tell you about the goodness of God, when I saw at the same time that this it is his wish that it be known? And you will see this clearly in the material that follows, if it is properly and truly understood.

[5] Then you shall soon forget all about me, I who am worthless, and thus not letting me hinder you, you must look upon Jesus, who is the teacher of all. I speak of those who shall be saved – for all this time, God showed me no others. But in all things, I believe what Holy Church teaches, for in all this blessed showing of our Lord I beheld it as one, in God's sight, and not once did I ever understand anything in it that puzzled me or kept me from the true teachings of Holy Church. [LT9.2–3]

SEVEN

All this blessed teaching of our Lord God was shown to me in three ways, that is to say, by bodily sight, by words formed in my

[834] Translating *charyte*, charity.

understanding, and by spiritual sight. But I cannot and may not reveal the spiritual visions as clearly and completely as I would wish, but I trust in our Lord God Almighty that he shall of his goodness and for your love,[835] help you to receive them more spiritually and more sweetly than I can or may tell it **you. And so may it be, for we are all one in love.** [LT9.4]

[2] And **in** all this, I was much moved by love[836] for my fellow Christians, that they may all see and know what I had seen, for I wished that it could comfort them **all, as it has me,** for this vision was shown for everyone, **and not for any particular person.** / Of all that I saw – that our good Lord is so homely and so courteous – this was the most comforting to me and that which filled me most with delight and spiritual security. [LT8.4 / 7.4]

[3] Then I said to the *people* who were with me, 'It is this day Doomsday with me.'[837] And I said this

[835] The phrase 'shall of his goodness and *for your love*' is reproduced verbatim. It is not clear whether Julian means to refer to God's love for her reader – 'because of the love God reserves as a gift for you' – or the love that her reader can have for God – 'hoping to evoke your love for God'. Julian, in the course of her writing, refers to the relationship that God has with us in terms of both God's love for us and our love for God.

[836] Translating *cheryte*, charity.

[837] 'Doom' is a cognate of 'deem', meaning judge, and 'Doomsday' refers to the Day of Judgement; if this is the day that Julian dies, then it will also be, for her, the Day of Judgement. This reflects the belief common

because I thought I was going to die (for on the day that a man or woman dies, each receives their particular judgement as to how they shall be for all time), saying this because I wanted them to love God the better, **to set a lower price on the vanity of the world,** and to make them bear in mind that our lives are short, as they might see by **my own** example, for all this time I believed that I would die. [LT8.4]

Eight

And after this, I saw with bodily sight the face of the crucifix that hung before me, of which I beheld continually a part of his Passion, seeing contempt, spitting, the *defiling of his body and the striking of his face, and much suffering and punishment,* more than I can tell, often changing colour, *and at one time all his blessed face caked in dried blood.* / This I saw bodily, *in distress* and darkness, and I wished there had been more light so that I could have seen more clearly. And I was answered in my reason, *that if God wishes to show me more, he would, for I need no light but him.* [LT10.1 / 2]

---

in Julian's time, though by no means universally held, that each individual upon their death is judged by God rather than waiting until the Day of Judgement.

[2] And after this I saw God in a point,[838] which is to say in my understanding – in this vision – I saw that he is in all things. I beheld with perceptiveness, *comprehending* and knowing in this vision that he does all that is done. I marvelled at that sight with a gentle awe, and thought 'What is sin?' For I saw truly that God does all things, however little. *And nothing is done* by chance or fortune, *but all by the endless foreseeing wisdom of God.* / Therefore I need to grant[839] that all things that are done are done well, for our Lord God does everything. / And I was sure that God does no sin. *Therefore it seemed to me that sin is nothing,* for in all this, sin was not shown **to me.** So I wondered no longer about this, but I watched our Lord, to see what he would show **me.** And at another

[838] Translating *I saw God in a poynte*. Julian's phrase carries a double sense. First, to 'see God in a point' is to apprehend the divine simplicity – God as unextended and indivisible being, the unity in which all creation subsists. Secondly, her insight here was given 'in a point': in an instant so brief that its suddenness reflects the very simplicity it discloses. The expression thus brings together ontology and experience, denoting both the oneness of God and the instantaneous act of insight by which Julian perceived that oneness. This vision recalls her earlier apprehension of the 'little thing' where she directly perceives the creation *as God sees it*. Here, this perception is turned round to *regard the creator himself*.

[839] Translating *Whare fore me behovede nedes grawnte*.

time, God showed **me** *what sin is, nakedly, by itself,*[840] as I shall later tell.[841] [LT11.1–2 / 3 / 4]

[3] And after this, as I watched, I saw the body [of Christ] bleeding profusely, **hotly, freshly and vividly, just as I had seen before regarding the head. And this was shown to me** in the weals of the scourging.[842] And I saw this[843] *run* so profusely that I thought that had this been happening in reality, then in this time it would have soaked the bed all in blood, and have spilled all over everything. / God has made abundant the waters of the earth,[844] and put them at our service for the comfort of our bodies, out of the tender love that he has for us. But he is better pleased that we receive his blessed blood *in its fullness,* for washing away our sin. For there is no liquid made

[840] i.e., as it is in itself.

[841] She is presumably referring her reader to ST13 and to 13.8 in particular.

[842] The Gospel accounts of the flagellation of Christ are brief and sparse. Matt 27:26 informs us that '... [Pilate] had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified' (NIV). Mk 15:15 similarly reports that, '... after flogging Jesus, [Pilate] handed him over to be crucified' (NRSV). And Jn 19:1 says, 'Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head ...' (NRSV). In accordance with John, Matthew and Mark also include references to the crown of thorns, with similarly concise content.

[843] i.e., the blood.

[844] See Ps 65:9, 'You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it' (NIV).

that he likes to give us as much as this one. For it is so plentiful, and it partakes in our own nature. [LT12.1 / 2]

[4] And after this, before God explained this **to me** with words, he allowed me to look *longer* upon all that I had seen, *and all that was in it.* And then without voice or any opening of lips, he made these words appear in my soul, 'Through this is the Fiend[845] overcome.' For in these words our Lord meant his Passion, which he had shown **me** before. In this our Lord **brought to my mind and** showed **me** part of the Fiend's malice, and his utter powerlessness; *and in doing so,* he showed **me** that his Passion is the overcoming of the Fiend. God showed **me** that the Fiend has the same malice now that he had before the Incarnation, and also that he labours just as hard, but continually he sees that *all those souls who are chosen* escape him gloriously.[846] And this is his sorrow, for all that God allows him to do brings us to joy, but to him it brings shame and pain. And he has as much sorrow when God gives him leave to work as when he does not work,[847] and this is

[845] i.e., Satan, or the Devil.

[846] Translating *worschipfullye*.

[847] This refers especially to the story of Job (see Job 1:6–12) where Satan is given permission to inflict all manner of sufferings and privations to press Job into forsaking God. It is a wager that Satan loses.

because he may never do as ill as he would like, for his strength is all locked in God's hands.[848] [LT13.1–2]

[5] Also, I saw our Lord scorning[849] his malice and set him at naught, and he wills that we do *the same*. Seeing this sight, I laughed out loud, making those who were with me laugh too, and I liked their laughter. I wished that all my fellow Christians had seen what I had seen, for then all of them would have laughed with me. But I did not see Christ laughing.[850] *Nevertheless, he likes it when we laugh,* to comfort ourselves and rejoice in God, for the Fiend is overcome. [LT13.4]

---

[848] In the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, Christ chains Satan during the Harrowing of Hell. See Rev 20:1–3 where the angel comes from Heaven with the key to the Abyss and the chain that will be used to bind Satan there for a thousand years.

[849] 'Scorn' (Middle English *scorne*) conveys more than simple contempt; it suggests complete rejection and utter disregard.

[850] There was a tradition in this period that Christ never laughed. In the Rule of Saint Benedict, laughter is condemned as the act of the fool. The concern is perhaps that laughter is too easily stimulated by vulgarity and finding pleasure in the misfortunes of others, and is therefore detrimental to the ideal Christian outlook. The questions as to whether Christ laughed, and regarding humour's capacity to destroy fear (and that without fear, faith is undermined) are major topics in Umberto Eco's novel, *The Name of the Rose* (1983), whose plot turns on trying to locate Aristotle's lost treatise on humour in the labyrinthine library of the monastery where the story is set: Aristotle's treatment is so potentially damaging to the Church that one of the monks is prepared to kill in order to keep it secret. At the end of the story, the lost book really is lost when it is consumed in a great conflagration.

[6] And after this I became serious again, and said, 'I see three things – gaiety, scorn and commitment. I see gaiety in that the Fiend is overcome, I see scorn because God scorns him, and continues to scorn him, and I see commitment in that he is overcome by the Passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ that was done through complete, magnificent commitment and with steadfast effort.' [LT13.5]

[7] After this, our Lord said, 'I thank you for your services, and for the hard labour of your youth.' [LT14.1]

Nine

God showed **me** three degrees of bliss that each soul, who while on earth has served God willingly in whatever way, shall have in Heaven. [LT14.2]

[2] The first is the glorious gratitude of our Lord God, which each shall receive when they are relieved of their suffering. This gratitude is so exalted and so honourable that each thinks themselves completely filled by it, even if no further **bliss** could come to them. For I thought that all the pain and effort that might be suffered by all those who live, might not

have deserved the gratitude that shall be had by even one man who willingly serves God.[851] [LT14.2]

[3] The second degree is that all the blessed creatures who are in Heaven shall see that honourable gratitude **of our lord God,** and all who are in Heaven shall be made aware of their service. [LT14.3]

[4] The third degree is that as much as it was pleasing when that gratitude was first *received,* so shall it last without end. And I saw how kindly and sweetly was it said and shown **to me** that everyone's age shall be known in Heaven, and they will be rewarded for that willing service and for the time that they serve, and especially the age of those who willingly and freely offer their youth to God is very much rewarded and wonderfully thanked. [LT14.4]

[5] And after this, he showed **my** soul an outstanding spiritual happiness. In this happiness, I was filled with an everlasting certainty, securely lodged, free of all anxiety. This feeling was so pleasant **to me** and so *kindly* that I was in a state of perfect peace, comfort and rest, and there was nothing on earth that could grieve me. [LT15.1]

[851] i.e., the gratitude that God extends to any one person who has suffered in life, in Julian's estimation, seems so large that it would more than suffice for everyone who has lived.

[6] This lasted but a while, and I was again by myself,[852] turned back to the sorrowful weariness of my life, and the loathing I had for myself undid all the endurance required for living. There was no comfort nor any relief from my feelings, but faith, hope and love.[853] These I had, in truth, yet I could not feel that it was so. [LT15.1]

[7] And soon after this, God once again gave me that comfort and that resting of my soul, a delight so secure and so blissful and powerful that no dread nor sorrow nor any bodily or spiritual pain that I might have suffered could have distressed me. But then that distress appeared again to my feeling, and then that joy and delight, and now the one and now the other at different times, I suppose about twenty times. And at those times of joy, I might have said with [Saint] Paul, 'Nothing can separate me from the love of Christ.'[854] And in my distress I might have said with Saint Peter, 'Lord save me, for I perish.'[855] [LT15.2]

---

[852] i.e., she is not aware of God's presence.

[853] Translating *cheryte*.

[854] See Rom 8:35, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?' (NIV)

[855] See Matt 14:30, where Peter cries to Jesus when he too tries walking on the Sea of Galilee and is frightened by the wind and starts to sink. At Matt 8:25, the disciples as a group cry out to Jesus, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' as the storm worsens (NRSV).

[8] This vision was shown to me to teach my understanding that it is *necessary that everyone* experience things this way, at some times to be in comfort, and sometimes to fail in this and to be left by themselves.[856] God wishes us to know that he cares for us, that he keeps us safe always, both in well-being[857] and in woe, **and that he loves us as much in sorrow as in well-being.** And for the benefit of his soul, a man is sometimes left by himself *even though* sin is not the cause, for at this time I did not sin, on account of which I should be left on my own. Also, I did not deserve to have this blissful feeling, yet our Lord freely gives it when he wishes, and at other times lets us suffer in woe, doing both from love. For it is God's wish that we hold on to comfort with all our strength, for bliss is lasting without end, whilst pain is passing and shall come to nothing. Therefore it is not God's wish that we be guided by feelings of pain, in sorrow and grieving over them, but quickly pass them by, and hold on to the endless joy that is God **Almighty, who loves us and cares for us.** [LT15.3–4]

[856] i.e., having a sense of being separated from God.

[857] Translating *weal*, meaning welfare, well-being, happiness, prosperity.

Ten

After this, Christ showed **me** the part of his Passion when he was close to death. I saw his sweet face, as it was then, dry and drained of blood, having the pallor of one dying, and then it turned even more pale, deathly, wasting away. After that, still closer to death, it turned blue. After that, the flesh turned a deeper blue, as death took its hold. *For all the pains that Christ suffered in his body were shown to me in his blessed face, as far as I could see,* especially in his lips, where I saw those four colours,[858] *though before,* I had seen them fresh and flushed, lively and pleasing to my sight. / This was a *distressing* change, to see this profound dying. I saw also his nose, withering and drying. [LT16.1 / 2]

[2] This torment seemed so long to me as if he had been dead a week,[859] constantly suffering pain. And I thought the drying of Christ's flesh brought the *worst pain of his Passion (and the last)*. [LT16.3]

[3] And by this drying was brought to my mind these words spoken by Christ, 'I thirst.'[860] For I saw in Christ a double thirst, one in the body and another

[858] Pallor, greater paleness, blue, deeper blue.

[859] Translating *a sevennyght.* The same period of time through which Julian experienced her illness.

[860] See Jn 19:28, 'Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty' (NRSV).

in the spirit, and these words were shown **to me** concerning the bodily thirst (as for what I was shown **to me** regarding the spiritual thirst, I shall talk of later[861]). And I understood that this bodily thirst was caused by the body's lack of moisture, for the blessed flesh and bones were left all alone, without blood or moisture. The blessed body dried all alone for a long time – twisted by its own weight **and the heaviness**[862] **of the head,** hanging on the nails, / the drying resulting from the blowing of the wind that pained him with cold more than my heart can conceive – together with **all** the other pains. [LT17.1 / 17.4]

[4] These pains that I saw may not be *told or spoken,* for whatever I may say of those pains would be too little. **But each soul, following the saying of Saint Paul, should feel in himself what is in Christ Jesus.**[863] This Showing of Christ's pains filled me full of pains myself, for I knew well that he suffered then but once, but he wanted to show them to me and

[861] In ST 15.3; see LT31.2.

[862] Translating *paysynge*, sagging, drooping.

[863] See Phil 2:5–8, 'Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross' (NRSV).

make me remember them as I had desired before. [LT17.4]

[5] **My mother, who stood amongst the others regarding me, held up her hand before my face in order to close my eyes. For she thought that I had been dead a while, or had just died. And this greatly increased my sorrow, for despite all my suffering, I did not wish to be hindered [from looking upon Christ's face] because of the love I had for him. And yet,** in all this time in Christ's presence, I felt no pain that was not Christ's pain. Then I realised that I had known very little of what pain it really was for which I asked,[864] thinking that my pain was worse than bodily death. I thought, 'Is there any pain in Hell like this?' And I was answered in my mind, *'Despair is worse, for that is a spiritual pain. But no bodily pain is worse than this.* How could any pain of mine be greater, than to see him suffer, who is all my life, all my bliss and all my joy?' Here I truly felt that I loved Christ so much more than myself that **I thought bodily death would have been a great relief to me.** [LT17.5]

[6] Here I saw, in part, the compassion of our Lady Saint Mary, for Christ and she were so united[865] in love that the greatness of her love was the cause of

[864] The pain she asked for at ST1.2.

[865] Translating *anede*, 'oned'.

the greatness of her pain. For as much as she loved him more than all others, so did her pain surpass that of all others. And so all his disciples and all those who truly loved him suffered a greater pain than when their own bodies were dying. For I am sure, through my own feeling, that the least of them loved him *more than they loved themselves*. [LT18.1]

[7] Here I saw a great unity between Christ and us. For when he was in pain, we were in pain, and all creatures capable of suffering pain suffered with him. **And those who did not know him, this was their pain: that all creatures, the sun and the moon, withdrew their service, so that for that time they were all left in sorrow.** [LT18.2]

[8] *And thus those who loved him suffered pain because of that love, and those who did not love him suffered pain because the comfort of all creatures failed.* [LT18.2]

[9] At that moment I wanted to look away from the cross, yet dared not, for I well knew that while *I was gazing* upon the cross, I was secure and safe. Therefore I could not assent to put my soul in peril. For there was no refuge from the fear of Fiends[866] other than the cross. Then I had a suggestion come into my mind, as if it had been spoken to me in a

[866] i.e., agents of the Devil, believed at this time to attend the dying for the purpose of making them forsake God and thereby come under the Devil's dominion at the point of death.

friendly voice, 'Look up to Heaven, to his Father.'[867] And then I saw clearly with the faith that I felt that there was nothing in between the cross and Heaven that could have distressed me. Here, I was compelled to look up or else to answer.[868] I answered and said, 'No. I dare not. For you are my Heaven.' This I said because I would not [avert my gaze]. For I would rather have been in pain till Doomsday than have come to Heaven other than through him. For I know well that he who bound me in such pain would unbind me when he wishes. [LT19.1–2]

Eleven

Thus I chose Jesus as my Heaven, whom I saw only in pain at that time. I wished for no other Heaven than Jesus, who shall be my bliss when I come there. And this has always been a comfort to me, that I chose Jesus as my Heaven, in all

[867] This voice comes, presumably, from the 'Fiends'. Remarking that the voice had spoken to her 'as if it had been friendly' (when, in fact, it was not) suggests a Satanic origin for the voice, and that the 'Fiends' were urging her to do something wrong or contrary to what God really wanted. This is puzzling because at this time it was the custom, when death seemed immanent, for the dying person to lift their eyes towards Heaven, towards the destination they hoped they would be taken, in every expectation that as they passed out of this life, they would see the glory of God.
[868] Translating *othere me behovyd loke uppe or els annswere*.

this time of suffering and sorrow. And this has been a lesson to me, that I should evermore do so, choosing only Jesus for my Heaven, in well-being and in woe. [LT19.3]

[2] And thus I saw **my** Lord Jesus languishing for a long time, for his union with the Godhead gave strength to his humanity, through love, to suffer more than anyone else could. I mean not only more pain than anyone else might suffer, but also that he suffered more pain even than tongue may tell or heart may think by any who ever lived from the very beginning down to the Last Day – considering the worthiness of the highest, honourable king and his shameful and cruel, painful death – because he who is highest and most worthy was foully condemned and utterly despised.[869] / *But* the love that made him suffer **all this,** it surpasses all his pains, as far as Heaven is above the earth. For the Passion was a deed done at one moment of time through the action of love, *but* love that was without beginning, is and shall be, without end. [LT20.1 / 22.4]

[869] Again, see Phil 2:5–8, 'Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross' (NRSV).

[3] Suddenly, as I gazed upon the same cross, I saw his blessed facial expression suddenly change to joy. The changing of his countenance changed mine, and I was as glad and happy as I could possibly be. Then our Lord brought cheerfully to my mind, '*What is* the point of your pain or your anguish?' And I was full of happiness. [LT21.1]

Twelve

Then our good Lord spoke and asked me, 'Are you satisfied that I suffered for you?' I said, 'Yes, good Lord. Thank you, good Lord, may you be blessed.' Then said our Lord, 'If you are satisfied, I am satisfied. It is a joy, a happiness, an endless delight to me that I ever endured such suffering for you. And if I could have suffered more, I would have suffered.' [LT22.1]

[2] In this inner feeling,[870] my understanding was lifted up into heaven. And there I saw three Heavens, at the sight of which I greatly marvelled, and thought, 'I see three Heavens and all the blessed humanity of Christ. And none is more, none is less, none is higher, none is lower, but each alike is bliss.'

[870] This is the feeling Julian records above at ST11.3, when she sees Christ's expression change to joy, making her as 'glad and happy as I could possibly be'.

For the first Heaven,[871] Christ showed me his Father, but not in bodily appearance, but in his nature and in his actions. The action of the Father is found in this, that he gives recompense to his Son, Jesus Christ. This gift and this reward is of such great joy to Jesus that his Father would have given him no reward that could have better pleased him. [LT22.1–2]

[3] The first Heaven, that is the *pleasure* felt by the Father, appeared to me as a Heaven full of great joy, for he is greatly *pleased* by all the deeds that *he* has done regarding our salvation. On which account we are his not only through his redeeming us, but also by the courteous gift of his Father[872] we are his bliss, we are his reward, we are his honour, we are his crown.[873] / These things of which I speak are so great a happiness to Jesus that he thinks nothing of all his toil and suffering and of his cruel and shameful

[871] The use of *for* here has the same function as it does in, 'For breakfast he gave me toast.'

[872] The Father gives to the Son the gift of humanity whom the Son has redeemed through his Passion. At LT55.1, in the *Showings*, the Son returns the gift to his Father in Heaven, which the Father then courteously returns to the Son.

[873] As the crown of thorns symbolises Christ's suffering consequent upon humanity's sinning, it can also be understood as a crown of victory that celebrates our eventual salvation, and indeed, at LT51.25 of the *Showings*, the crown has transformed – it seems – into the usual sort of precious metal more appropriate for that celebration.

death. And in these words, 'If I could have suffered more, I would have suffered more,' I saw truly that *if he could die once for each man who shall be saved as he died once for all men,* love would never let him have rest until he had done it. And *when he had done it,* he would set it at naught for love, for to him everything seems so little when compared to his love. / *And this he showed to me most solemnly, saying these words,* 'If I could suffer more.' He did not say, 'If more suffering were needed,' but 'If I could suffer more.' For although it was not necessary, if he could suffer more, he would. [LT22.2 / 3 / 4]

[874][4] /22.5/This deed and his work concerning our salvation was as well done as God might ordain it. It was done as honourably as Christ might do it. And here I saw complete happiness in Christ, for his happiness could not have been complete if it could have been done better than it was done. /23.1/And in these three words, 'It is a joy, a bliss, and endless delight to me,' were shown **to me** three Heavens,[875] thus: for the joy, I understood the pleasure of the Father; and for the bliss, the honour of the Son; and

[874] Because ST12.4 is drawn ('cut and pasted') from seven different passages in LT, we indicate their locations here using the chapter–paragraph notation adopted in this edition. Several of these passages show omissions, paraphrases, and occasional additions (marked in **bold**) when compared closely with LT.

[875] i.e., supremely blissful experiences.

for the endless delight, the Holy Spirit. The father is pleased, the son is honoured, the Holy Spirit delights. /23.4/Jesus wishes that we pay heed to the delight taken by the blessed Trinity in our salvation, *and that we ourselves should take as much pleasure, with his grace,* **while we are here** [**on earth**]**.** And this was shown **to me** through these words, 'Are you well pleased?' And by these other words that Christ spoke, 'If you are well pleased, I am well pleased,' **leading me to understand,** as if he had said, 'It is a joy and a pleasure enough for me, and I ask for nothing else for my suffering but that I may please you.' /23.5/In a thorough and complete way was this shown **to me.** /23.6/Reflect thoughtfully on the importance of these words, /22.1/*'That ever I suffered my Passion for you.'* /23.6/For in these words was shown a great sign of the love **and pleasure** that he has for our salvation. [LT22.5 / 23.1 / 23.4 / 23.5 / 23.6 / 22.1 / 23.6]

Thirteen

Most joyously and gladly, our Lord looked into his side,[876] and gazing steadily said *these words,* / 'See how I love you,' as if he had said, **'My child, if you cannot look upon my Godhead, see here how I allow my side to open and my heart be cloven in two, letting out all the blood and water that was inside.**[877] **And because this pleases me, I wish that it please you.'** Our good Lord showed **me** this to make us glad and cheerful. [LT24.1 / 24.2]

[2] And with the same *expression of delight,* he looked down to his right, bringing to my attention the place where our Lady stood at the time of his Passion,[878] and he said, 'Would you like to see her?' / I answered and said, 'Yes, good Lord, thank you, if that be your wish.' Often I had prayed for this, hoping to see her physical appearance, but I never did see her. Yet now, Jesus with those very words

[876] This references the wound in Jesus' side, inflicted by the soldier overseeing Jesus' crucifixion who used his spear to make sure that the execution had been successful; see Jn 19:34. This wound, which gives access to Jesus' heart, was a major topic in medieval devotion.

[877] This is the fluid that flowed from the wound.

[878] Scenes of the Crucifixion traditionally portray Mary located on Jesus' *right side*, resulting in her being on their viewers' *left side* as they observe the depictions.

showed me a spiritual vision of her; in contrast with how I had seen her before, weak and lowly,[879] he now showed her exalted and noble and glorious, and pleasing to him above all creatures. And so he wishes it to be known that all who delight in him should delight in her, / and in the delight that he has in her and she in him. [LT25.1 / 25.3 / 25.1]

[3] And in these words that Jesus spoke, 'Would you like to see her?' I thought that *I had the greatest pleasure that he could have given me,* and with the spiritual vision of her that he gave to me. For our Lord showed me nothing special, but our Lady Saint Mary, and her he showed **me** three times.[880] The first was when she conceived, the second was in her sorrow under the cross, and the third, as she is now, in delight, honour and joy. [LT25.4]

[4] And after this our Lord showed himself **to me** in even greater splendour than I had seen him before, in which I was taught that **each contemplative soul to whom it is given to look for and seek God shall see her, and pass on to God through contemplation.**[881] [LT26.1]

---

[879] Referring to her experience in ST4.4.

[880] Mary is shown at ST4.4 at the time she conceived, 'meek and simple'; she is mentioned again at ST10.6 in her sorrow under the cross; and just now at ST13.2 Mary appears 'noble and glorious'.

[881] Julian nowhere in LT refers to contemplative practice as such or to those who follow it. Nowhere else does Julian suggest to her reader that

[5] **And after this** homely and courteous **teaching** of true and joyful life, often our Lord Jesus said **to me,**

It is I who am the most exalted.
It is I whom you love.
It is I who pleases you.
It is I whom you serve.
It is I whom you long for.
It is I whom you desire.
It is I whom you intend.
It is I who am all.
It is I whom Holy Church preaches of and teaches you.
It is I who showed you myself, before.
[LT26.1–2]

[6] *These words I declare here only* so that each man may receive them as our Lord intends, through the grace of the understanding and love that God gives. [LT26.3]

[7] And after this, our Lord brought **to my** mind the longing that I had for him earlier on,[882] and I saw nothing holding me back but sin. And so I saw

they can or should 'pass on to God' through Mary. It is fair to conjecture that this material has been added by the editor(s) of the ST.

[882] This is the wound of 'deep longing for God', introduced at the end of ST1.5.

generally for all of us. And I thought that if there had been no sin, we would all have been pure, and like our Lord, as he made us. And thus in my folly, before this time, I often wondered why, by God's great foreseeing wisdom, sin had not been prevented. For then, I thought, all would have been well. [LT27.1]

[8] I should have shunned these thoughts, but I mourned and sorrowed over their consideration, unreasonably, without discretion **and full of great pride.** Nevertheless, *Jesus in this vision* informed me of all that I needed. **I do not say that I need no further teaching, for our Lord, in showing this, has left me to Holy Church, and I am hungry and thirsty and needy and sinful and frail, and willingly submit myself to the teaching of Holy Church, together with all my fellow Christians, until the end of my life.** [LT27.2]

[9] He answered through these words and said, 'Sin is inevitable.[883] With this word 'sin', our Lord brought to my mind, in general, all that is not good, and the shameful contempt and the uttermost

[883] Translating *behovelye*, meaning both necessary and fitting; also carrying the connotation of beneficial, proper and appropriate. Adam's sin was necessary (in consequence of which all further sin is now possible) for the Incarnation, which was part of God's plan from before the creation.

humiliation[884] that he bore for us in this life, and in his dying, and all the pain and suffering of all his creatures, in spirit and in body. For we shall all in some degree be *humiliated, humiliated* as was our master Jesus, until we are fully purged of our mortal flesh and of all our inner emotions which are not truly good. [LT27.2]

[10] And this I beheld, together with all the suffering that ever was and ever shall be. All this was shown **to me** through the slightest touch, and it quickly passed away, turning to a sense of comfort, for our good Lord does not wish that the soul be afraid of this ugly sight. But I did not see sin. For I believe that it has no manner of substance, nor any part of being, nor might it be known but by the suffering that it causes.[885] And, as I see it, this suffering is present but for a while, for it purges us, making us know ourselves and ask for mercy, for the Passion of our Lord is a comfort to us against all this, for this is his blessed wish. And for the tender love that our good Lord has for all who shall be saved,[886]

---

[884] Translating *noghtynge*, to be thought of as nothing, worthless, unimportant; when applied to a person, meant to belittle, humiliate, disregard, demean and ignore.

[885] Sin is thus the lack of something positive, the lack of love and good will, not the presence of something negative that has any sort of existential being in its own right.

[886] The notion of 'all who shall be saved' was introduced in ST6.5.

he comforts us readily and sweetly, **through these words,** *saying,* 'But all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.'[887] These words were spoken most tenderly, placing no manner of blame upon me, nor upon any who shall be saved. Thus was it a great unkindness for me to blame, or wonder at God for my sin, because he does not blame me for sinning.[888] [LT27.2–4]

[11] Thus I saw how Christ has compassion for us because of our sin. And just as I was before filled with pain and compassion at the sight of Christ's Passion, likewise was I now partly filled with compassion for all of my fellow Christians. And then I saw that each kind compassion that with love a man has for his fellow Christians, *that* is Christ within him. [LT28.1]

---

[887] This is the first time that this phrase occurs in the *Visions*. That *alle shalle be wele* is perhaps Julian's most enduring refrain. Holloway (2003, xii, xviii) holds that Julian had been educated in Hebrew, could read the Old Testament in its original language and, hence, that she purposefully chose the expression 'all shall be well' as a translation of the Hebrew שָׁלוֹם, *shalom*, meaning peace, harmony, the absence of conflict, and by extension '... a totalizing of wellness, goodness, oneness, creation and Creator in harmony' (2003, xviii). 'Shall' in Middle English carries the implication of necessity. Julian therefore means that everything is both *going to be* well, and also *must of necessity* be well.

[888] That we are not blamed by God for our sin is mentioned only this once in the *Vision*; it is, however, a recurring topic in the *Showings*. See LT27, 28, 39, 40, 50, 51, 52, 80 and 82.

Fourteen

But here I lingered, thinking about all this in general, *dejected* and grieved, saying this in my thoughts to our Lord, with complete reverence, 'Ah, good Lord, how may all be well, for through sin great harm comes to your creatures?' And here I dared to hope that my thoughts might be eased by some further, clear, explanation. And to this our blessed Lord answered most meekly, and with a most kindly expression, and told me that Adam's sin was the greatest harm ever done, or that ever shall be, until the world's ending, showing also that this is openly acknowledged throughout Holy Church on earth. [LT29.1]

[2] Furthermore, he instructed **me** to consider the glorious Atonement.[889] For this Atonement is more pleasing to the blessed Godhead, and more efficacious for man's salvation, without comparison, than ever was the sin of Adam harmful. This then is what our blessed Lord intends, that through this teaching we should take heed of this, 'For since I have made well what is most harmful, then it is my wish that you know by this that I shall make well all that is less harmful.' [LT29.2]

[889] Translating *asethe*, following Watson and Jenkins.

[3] There were two parts to my understanding of this. One part concerns our Saviour and our Salvation. This blessed part is open, clear, fair and light and abundant, for all mankind that has a good will, and all who yet shall be, are enclosed in this part. To this we are summoned by God, and drawn to it and counselled and taught inwardly by the Holy Spirit, and outwardly by Holy Church, through the same grace. In this our Lord wants us to be occupied, rejoicing in him, as he rejoices in us. And the more abundantly we partake of this, with reverence and meekness, the more thanks we deserve from him and the more we benefit ourselves, and thus may we say, rejoicing, 'Our portion is our Lord.'[890] [LT30.1]
[4] The other part is hidden and held back from us, that is to say, everything that is not relevant to our Salvation, for that is our Lord's privy council, and it is right that the royal lordship of God should hold his privy councils in peace,[891] and it is fitting that his servants, out of obedience and reverence, should not wish to know of his counsels. Our Lord has pity and compassion for us because some creatures concern themselves with these matters, and I am sure that if we knew how greatly we would please him and ease

[890] See Ps 16:5, 'Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure' (NIV).
[891] God is here modelled on an earthly king who discusses matters of state with his privy council.

our concerns by leaving all this alone, we would. The saints in Heaven wish to know nothing, except only what our Lord wants to show them, and their love[892] and their desire are governed by the will of our Lord. And so ought our wishes be the same as theirs. Then we shall not wish for anything, nor have any desire for anything but the will of our Lord, just like them.[893] For in God's purpose we are all one. And in this was I taught that we should rejoice only in our blessed saviour Jesus, and trust in him for everything. [LT30.2–3]

Fifteen

And here our good Lord answered all the questions and doubts that I might have,[894] saying most comfortingly **in this way**: 'I will make all things well. I shall make all things well. I may make all things well, and I can make all things well.'[895] And you shall see for yourself that all things shall be well.' [LT31.1]

---

[892] Translating *charyte*.

[893] i.e., the saints.

[894] Those that were raised at ST14.1.

[895] The terms *will*, *shall*, *may*, *can* have different senses in Middle English. Here, *will* means wanting or having the wish to make all things well; *shall* expresses the definite intention to do so; *may* means 'can' in the sense of having the capacity or power to do so; and *can* means having the knowl-

[2] I understood 'I may' to be said by the Father. And I understood 'I can' to be said by the Son. And I understood 'I will' to be said by the Holy Spirit. And I understood 'I shall' to be said by the unity of the blessed Trinity, three persons in one truth. And where he says, 'You shall see for yourself,' I understood that this refers to the uniting of all mankind that shall be saved into the blessed Trinity. [LT31.1]

[3] And in these five words[896] God wishes that we be enclosed in rest and peace. And thus shall the spiritual thirst of Christ come to an end. For this is the spiritual thirst of Christ, his love-longing[897] for us that lasts and ever shall until we see that sight at Doomsday, for we who shall be saved, and shall be Christ's joy and his bliss, *are as yet here [on earth], and shall be* until that [last] day. Therefore, this is [the source of] his thirst: *his unfulfilled bliss, in that he does not have us as wholly in him as he shall have then*. [LT31.1–2]

---

edge required for doing so. These are the conditions that must be present for any agent to act: the agent must wish or want to act (*will*), must have the definite intention of doing so (*shall*); must possess the power or capacity to act (*may*), and must know how to act (*can*).

[896] Possibly these are the five words from the phrase in the previous sentence: '*Thowe shalle se thy selfe*,' at the end of ST15.2. Alternatively, the reference might relate to ST15.1, to the five-word phrase, '... *alle thynge shall be wele*.' For further conjectures, see the note to LT31.1.

[897] Translating *luff langynge*.

[4] And all this was *shown me* in this Showing of his compassion, and that it will cease at Doomsday.[898] Thus he has pity and compassion for us. And he has a longing to have us, but his wisdom and his love do not let the end come until the best time. [LT31.5]

[5] With the same five words spoken before, 'I may make all things well [etcetera],'[899] I took the most profound comfort in all the works of our Lord God that are yet to come. / For just as the blessed Trinity made all things from nothing, so the same blessed Trinity shall make well all that is not well. / It is God's wish that we pay considerable regard to all the deeds that he has done, through which he wants us to know thereby about all that he shall do. **And this he showed me in these words, when he said, 'And you shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well.' This I understood in two ways: first, I am fully content that I do not know it, and also I am pleased and happy that I shall know it.** [LT32.3 / 32.4 / 33.3]

[6] **It is God's wish that we know that all shall be well generally. But it is not God's wish that we should know this now, but only to the extent that it**

[898] Because at this point, it will have been fulfilled.

[899] Again, possibly the five words from the phrase *thowe shalle se thy selfe* at the end of ST15.2. Possibly she is referring to ST15.1, with its 'will', 'shall', 'may', 'can', and 'shall' again.

is appropriate for the present time. And that is the teaching of Holy Church.

SIXTEEN

God showed **me** the very great pleasure that he has in all those men and women who eagerly and meekly and *honourably* receive the preaching and teaching of Holy Church, for he is Holy Church, he is the ground, he is the foundation,[900] he is the teaching, he is the teacher, he is the end, and he is the reward for which every *true* soul toils, and this is known, and shall be known, to each soul to whom the Holy Spirit declares it. And I *am certain* that all who thus seek shall be helped, for they seek God. [LT34.2]

[2] All this that I have now spoken, and more that I shall say later, is comforting against sin. *First,* when I saw that God does all that is done, I did not see sin, but I saw that all is well. But when God did show sin to me, then he said, 'All shall be well.' [LT34.3]

[3] And when God Almighty had shown **me** his goodness so abundantly and so fully, I *desired* [to know], regarding a certain creature that I loved, *how*

[900] Translating *substannce*.

it should be with her,[901] *and in this desire I hindered myself,* for I was not taught about this at this time. And then I was answered in my understanding, as it were by a friendly intermediary, 'Accept all [these Showings] as they apply generally, and consider the kindness of your Lord God in his showing them to you, for God is better honoured in seeing him in everything than in any particular thing.' I assented, and in this I learned that God is more honoured by my knowing everything in general than by my taking pleasure in any particular thing. And if I followed this teaching wisely, I should not be glad of any particular thing, nor greatly distressed by any manner of thing, for all shall be well. [LT35.1]

[4] God brought to mind that I would sin, and because of the delight I had in contemplating him, I did not at once pay attention to this Showing. And our Lord most *kindly*[902] *waited for me to pay attention. And then our Lord brought to my mind, alongside my own sins, the sins of all my fellow Christians,* in general, and not just regarding myself in particular. [LT37.1]

[901] Prophetic insights into the welfare of others, deceased or living, was accepted as part of the visionary experience at this time (see the note in Watson and Jenkins). The use of the female pronoun 'her' shows that this person is a woman.

[902] Translating *curtayslye*.

SEVENTEEN

Although our Lord showed me that I would sin, by me alone he means everyone. And in this I conceived a slight concern, to which our Lord answered **me thus**, 'I watch over you most surely.' These words were spoken **to me** with more love and assurance of spiritual protection than I could ever say, for just as it was shown to me that I would sin, so too was shown **to me** the comfort and safe keeping of all my fellow Christians.[903] What could make me love my fellow Christians more than to see that God loves all who shall be saved, as though they were all one soul? [LT37.2–3]

[2] And in every soul that shall be saved is a goodly will that never assented to sin, nor ever shall.[904] Just as there is a brutish will in our *lower* nature that cannot desire anything good, there is a *goodly* will in our higher nature which **no less than the Persons of the blessed Trinity** can never desire evil, but only ever good. And this our good Lord showed **me** in the wholeness of love that we dwell in, in his sight; yes,

[903] See Rom 4:8, 'Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them' (NIV); and Ps 32:2, 'Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit' (NIV).

[904] See 1 Jn 3:9, 'No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God' (NIV).

that he loves us now while we are here, as well as he shall do when we are there before his blessed face. [LT37.3]

[3] And God showed **me** that sin shall be no shame to man, but his honour.[905] / For in this vision my understanding was lifted up to Heaven. And then God brought *clearly* to my attention David,[906] *Peter and Paul,*[907] *Thomas of India*[908] *and Mary Magdalene,*[909] and how, with their sins **to their honour,** they are recognised by the Church on earth. *And it is no shame to them that they have sinned,* **no more than it is in the bliss of Heaven,** for there, the token of sin is turned into honour. **In this way did our Lord God show them to me as examples of all the others who shall come there.** [LT38.1 / 2]

[4] Sin is the sharpest scourge that any chosen soul may be *beaten* with. When whipped by this scourge,

---

[905] Translating *wirschippe*, meaning honour, esteem, worthiness, merit.

[906] This is David from the Bible, the second king of Israel and Judah, who committed adultery with Bathsheba.

[907] Peter is referenced here because he denied Jesus three times (Matt 26:69–75), and Paul is listed because before his conversion he persecuted the Christians (Acts 8–9).

[908] This is Thomas the Apostle, who in the Acts of Thomas (a 3rd-century apocryphal text) is reported to have travelled to India decades after the Crucifixion to continue his apostolic mission. He is listed here because he doubted the resurrection (Jn 20:19–23).

[909] In this context, Julian is identifying Mary Magdelene with the sinful woman whom Jesus forgives in Lk 7:36–50.

a man or woman is all but broken and made *despicable* in their own sight, so *that they think* they are not worthy of anything but sinking into Hell. *But* the touch of the Holy Spirit brings contrition, *then* turns their bitterness to hope for God's mercy, and then begins to heal their wounds, and the soul, now revived, returns to the life of Holy Church. The Holy Spirit leads them willingly to confession, to reveal their sins candidly and truthfully, and with great sorrow and great shame that they have befouled the fair image of God, and then undertakes their penance for every sin, imposed by their confessor, as established in Holy Church by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. [LT39.1]

[5] By *this medicine* every sinful soul needs to be healed,[910] **especially of sins that are in themselves mortal.** Although healed, his wounds appear before God, not as wounds, but as signs of honour. Whereas on the one hand we are[911] punished here with sorrow and with suffering, on the other, we[912] shall be rewarded in Heaven by the benevolent love of our God Almighty, who wishes that none who come

[910] Translating *Be this medycynn behoves ever ilke synfulle saule be heled.*
[911] Translating *it es*, 'it is', that is, the sinful soul.
[912] *it* again, referencing the sinful soul, the subject of the paragraph. LT uses the first-person plural pronoun, 'we'. The third-person singular pronoun of ST, 'it', is hard to incorporate into a readable translation. Just to note that the compiler of ST has removed 'we' and substituted 'it'.

there should have their hardships wasted. / The reward that we shall *receive there*[913] shall not be little, but it shall be most glorious and honourable. And so shall all shame be turned to honour and *more* joy. / And through my own feeling, I am sure that the more each kind soul sees this in the *kind and gracious* love of God, the more loath he is to sin. [LT39.3 / 39.4 / 40.3]

Eighteen

But if *you should be moved* to say or to think, '*Seeing that* this is true, then it would be good to sin, in order to gain a greater reward,'[914] beware of this inclination **and despise it,** for it comes from the Enemy. **For any soul that willingly responds to this notion can never be saved until he makes amends, as if for a mortal sin.** For if all the sufferings in Hell and of purgatory and on earth were laid out before *me,* death and all the others, set against sin, I *would* rather choose all that suffering than sin, for sin is so vile and so greatly to be hated that it cannot be compared to any suffering, if that suffering is not sin itself. For all is good but sin, and nothing is *wicked*

[913] i.e., in Heaven.

[914] See Rom 6:1–2, 'What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?' (NIV).

but sin. **Sin is neither action nor the feeling of pleasure. But when a soul freely chooses sin – that is, suffering – in preference to God, it finds itself, in the end, with absolutely nothing. That suffering seems to me to be the hardest Hell, for he does not have his God. A soul may have God through all suffering, but not in sin.** [LT40.3]

[2] And as powerful and wise as God is to save mankind, so is he willing. For Christ himself is the ground of all the laws of Christian men, and he taught us to do good in return for evil. Here we may see that he is himself this love,[915] and does to us what he teaches us to do [to others],[916] for he wants us to be like him in the oneness of endless love for ourselves and for all our fellow Christians. Just as his love for us is not broken because of our sin, he does not wish that our love for ourselves and for our fellow Christians be broken. Instead, we must unreservedly hate sin and endlessly love the soul, as God loves it. For in these words that God spoke is an endless comfort, that 'he keeps us very safe.' [LT40.4]

[915] Translating *charite*.

[916] See Matt 7:12, 'So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets' (NIV).

NINETEEN

After this, our Lord taught me about prayer. *I saw two qualities in those who pray, corresponding to what I have felt in myself.* One is that they never wish to pray for anything that may be, but for those things that God wishes for and are to his honour. The other is that they set themselves earnestly and continually to pray for those things that he wishes for and are to his honour. And this is how I have understood the teaching of Holy Church, for in this our Lord taught me the same, to receive, as a gift from God, faith, hope and love,[917] and to hold to them until our lives end. And for this we say 'Our father', 'Hail Mary', and the creed with as much devotion as God may give it. And thus we pray for all our fellow Christians, and for all manner of men, as God wishes it. For we wish that all manner of men and women should have the same virtue and grace that we ought to desire for ourselves. [LT41.1]

[2] But yet in all this, often, our trust is not complete, because we are not sure that God hears us on account, as we think it, of our lack of merit and because we feel so worthless. For we are often as barren and dry after our prayers as we were before,

[917] Translating *charite*.

and thus it feels to us that our folly[918] is the cause of weakness, for I have felt this myself. [LT41.1]

[3] And all this our Lord brought suddenly to my mind, **powerfully and vividly, to comfort me against this kind of weakness in prayer,** saying, 'I am the ground of your beseeching. First, it is my wish that you should have something, next I make you wish it, and then I make you beseech me for it, and you do beseech me for it. So how could it then be that you should not have what you beseech of me?' And thus in this first statement,[919] with the three that follow,[920] our good Lord reveals a great consolation. And in the first statement, where he says, 'You beseech me,'[921] there he reveals the greatest pleasure and endless reward that he will give us for our beseeching. And in the fourth statement where he says, 'So how could it then be **that you should not have what it is you beseech me for?'**[922] **– there he**

[918] *foly* for Julian had more of an emphasis of sinfulness than it has for us.

[919] Translating *reson*, reason as in what accounts for or explains something.

[920] The 'first statement' is 'God wishes that you have something'; the second is 'God makes you wish for it'; the third is 'God makes you beseech him for it'; and the fourth is 'You do beseech God for it.'

[921] This is the fourth statement enumerated above (in ST and in our previous explanatory note, above), and not the first.

[922] 'So how could it then be, that you should not have what it is you beseech me for?' was not presented as a statement at all. The statements provide an account of what it means for God to be the ground or source

shows a solemn undertaking, for we do not trust as strongly as we should. Thus our Lord wants us to both pray and to trust, and here is the reason for the preceding statements, to give us strength against the weakness of our prayers. [LT41.2–3]

[4] **For it is God's wish that we pray, and to this end he stirs us with the preceding words, because he wants us to be confident that our prayers will be answered. For prayer pleases God. Through prayer may someone be satisfied in themselves, making them calm and gentle, where before they suffered contention and turmoil.**

[5] Prayer unites the soul to God,[923] yet though the soul is always like God in nature and in substance, it is often in a condition unlike God because of sin on man's part. *Then prayer makes the soul like God, when*

---

of anyone beseeching him, and therefore getting what it is they beseech from God. The AMHERST manuscript shows signs that *fo*^{u}*rte* (fourth) was written in as a correction, rubbing away the original ink and layer of parchment in order to do so. It is likely that the original letters read *sixte* (sixth). This makes sense if we enumerate the statements as follows:

(1) 'I am the ground of your beseeching.
(2) 'God wishes that you have something';
(3) 'God makes you wish for it';
(4) 'God makes you beseech him for it';
(5) 'You do beseech God for it.';
(6) 'So how could it then be, that you should not have what it is you beseech me for?'

[923] See 1 Cor 6:17, 'But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him' (NRSV).

the soul wants what God wants, **and then it is like God in its condition as it is in its nature.** And thus God teaches us to pray, and steadfastly trust that we shall have *what we pray for,* **for everything that is done would be done, even though we never prayed for it.** *But the love of God is so great that he considers us partners in his good deeds.* [LT43.1]

[6] And therefore he moves us to pray for what it pleases him to do, and for these prayers and good will that he gifts to us, he will reward us and give us unending recompense. And this was shown **me** in these words, 'And you beseech it.' In these words, God showed **me** such great pleasure and such great delight as if he were hugely in debt to us for each good deed that we do, *even though it is he who does it,* and because we beseech him *diligently* to do those things that please him, it is as if he had said, 'How could you please me more than to beseech me emphatically, wisely and eagerly to do the things that I wish to have done?' [LT43.1–2]

[7] /43.2/*And thus through prayer is man's soul in accord with God,* **though throughout that time when man's soul is at home with God, he does not need to pray, but reverently attend to what God says. For in all this time whilst this was shown to me, I was not moved to pray, but for my comfort always to keep these thoughts in my mind,** /43.3/*that when we see God, we have what we desire, and then we have no*

need to pray. /43.4/*But when we do not see God, then we need to pray, on account of our failing, and to prepare ourselves for Jesus.* For when the soul is tested and troubled and lost to itself in its distress, then it is time to pray, to make oneself obedient and submissive to God. But no manner of prayer can make God obedient to the soul, for God's love is always the same. /47.2/*But for the time that man is in the state of sin, he is so lacking in strength and in wisdom,* **and [feels] so unloved that he can love neither God nor himself. His most grievous affliction** *is his blindness, for he sees nothing at all of this.* /40.1/**Then the entire love of God Almighty, which is ever one,**[924] **gives him sight to see himself,** and then he thinks that God must be angry with him for his sin. Then he is stirred through contrition *and by confession and other good deeds* to slake God's anger until the time he finds rest for his soul and comfort for his conscience. And then he thinks that God has forgiven his sins, and it is true. *And then his soul sees that God has turned to look upon it, as if the soul* had been in pain or in prison, saying this, *'I am glad you have come to rest, for I have always*

[924] *that ever is ane* – Julian may mean that God and God's love are identical, one and the same thing.

loved you, and love you still, and you love me.'[925] [LT43.2 / 43.3 / 43.4 / 47.2 / 40.1]

[8] **And thus with prayers, as I have been saying, and with other good works that are customary, according to the teaching of Holy Church, is the soul united to God.**

TWENTY

Before this time, I **often** had a great longing, and *desired* that God's gift deliver me from this world and from this life,[926] **because I would be with my God in bliss where I firmly hope, through his mercy, to be without end.** For often I witnessed the sorrow that is here and the well-being and blessed existence that is there. And even if there had been no suffering *on this earth* other than the absence of our Lord, I sometimes thought that it was more than I could bear. And this made me grieve and constantly yearn. [LT64.1]

[925] This paragraph represents a substantial reworking of its LT source. Much of the material is paraphrased or condensed; one result is the removal of references to God's homeliness.

[926] See Phil 1:21–3, 'For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better' (NRSV).

[2] *And then to give me comfort and patience, God said this to me,* 'Suddenly,[927] you shall be taken from all your suffering, from all your sickness, from all your discomfort and from all your sorrow.[928] And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss. And you shall never again have any manner of suffering, no manner of sickness, no manner of displeasure, no frustrating of desires, but forever joy and bliss, without end. Why should it then grieve you to be patient for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?'[929] [LT64.2]

[3] Also in this remark, 'Suddenly you shall be taken', I saw how God rewards people for the patience they show in awaiting God's wishes, and for their proper time to die. And I saw that people extend their patience over the entire span of their lives because they do not know the time of their passing. This is a great benefit, because if they knew when that was going to be, they would exhaust this

[927] See Matt 24:50, 'The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of' (NIV).

[928] Translating *waa*, woe.

[929] Clearly, Julian means to reference the content of Rev 21:1–4: 'Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away ... There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away,' where John describes the New Jerusalem. The question that God closes with reappears at ST20.6.

patience before their time came.[930] And also, God wishes that while the soul is in the body, it should seem to itself that it is constantly on the point of being taken, for all this life and all this longing that we have here occupies but a moment,[931] and when we are suddenly taken out of suffering into bliss, then suffering shall be as nothing. [LT64.3]

[4] *And therefore our Lord said,* 'Why should it then grieve you to be patient for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?' It is God's wish that we accept his promises and his comforting with as much generosity and strength as we can. And also, he wishes that we bear our waiting and our hardships as lightly as we can, and set them at nought, for the more lightly that we take them and the less importance we place upon them because of our love, the less suffering we shall have in feeling them, and the more thanks and reward we shall have for them. [LT64.6–7]

[930] See Col 1:11, 'May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience' (NRSV), Jm 5:7, 'Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming' (NIV), and Ps 39:4, 'Show me, Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is' (NIV).

[931] Translating *poynte*.

[5] **In this blessed Revelation,** *I was truly taught*[932] that any man or woman who in this life, willingly chooses God, may be sure *that they are chosen. Hold to this with confidence, for truly it is God's will* that we may all be secure and *trust in* the bliss of Heaven while we are here, as we shall be certain of it when we are there. And the more pleasure and joy we take in this certainty, with reverence and humility, the better is he pleased. / **For I am sure that if there had been none but I who should be saved,** *God would have done all that he has done, for me.* And this should every soul think in regard *to God's love for them,* **forgetting, if they can, everyone else,** and think that God has done for them all that he has done. [LT65.1 / 65.3]

[6] *And this I think should stir a soul* to love him and like him and fear nothing but him, for it is his wish that we know well that all the might of our Enemy is locked in our Friend's hands.[933] And therefore the soul that knows this with certainty, shall not fear anyone but him whom he loves, and all other fears are set among afflictions[934] and bodily sickness and delusions.[935] And therefore, *although a man* be in so much pain, sorrow and distress that *he* can think of

[932] LT has *understode*.

[933] This is the only instance in ST that Julian refers to God as a Friend. (See LT14.1, 40.1, 49.3, 71.1, 76.3–4.)

[934] Translating *passyons*.

[935] Translating *imagynacions*.

absolutely nothing but the state *he* is in, or what *he is* feeling, as soon as *he* can he should lightly pass over it, and say it is nothing. And why? Because God wants us to know him. For if we know him and love him, we shall have patience and be at complete rest, and all that he does will be more pleasing to us. And this our Lord showed **me** in these words when he said, 'Why should it grieve you to suffer for a while, since this is my wish and for my honour?'[936] [LT65.4]

[7] *And here was the end of all that our Lord showed me that day.* [LT66.1][937]

Twenty-One

And after this, I soon came back to myself and to my bodily sickness, *with the understanding that I would live and, as a wretch, writhed and moaned on account of the bodily pains that I felt,* **and thought it most vexing that I must live longer.** And I was all barren, and as dry as if I had had hardly any comfort, *because I succumbed to my pains and the failing of my spiritual feeling.* [LT66.1]

[936] Repeating the question from the end of ST20.2 and the opening of ST20.4.

[937] Could also be picking up LT68.8 which also references the conclusion to the Showings. Note also the final sentence of ST22.5.

[2] Then a religious person[938] came to me and asked how I fared, and I said that I had raved that day, and he laughed loudly and heartily. And then I said, 'The cross[939] *that stood at the foot of my bed,* it bled profusely,' and hearing these words, the person that I spoke to grew all serious, and marvelled. And I was immediately very ashamed at my recklessness. And I thought, 'This man takes seriously the least word that I might say, **and says nothing in reply.**' [LT66.2]

[3] And when I saw that he took it so seriously and with such great reverence, I grew most greatly ashamed and wanted to make my confession. But I could tell it to no priest, for I thought, 'Why should a priest believe me, when by saying that I raved I showed that I myself did not believe our Lord God?' – although I truly believed him[940] for the time that I saw him, and thus was it my wish and my intention forever to do so, without end. But as a fool, I let it

[938] *Religious* denotes someone under vows in a religious order, probably a friar or canon, or a Benedictine monk from the Benedictine Priory in Norwich, possibly Adam Easton, who we know was in Norwich at this time (Holloway 2003, x). Whoever it was, it is not unlikely that this person was Julian's familiar confessor or spiritual director. However, in light of her remark in the next paragraph (ST21.3), 'But I could tell it to no priest...' we may presume that the religious person is in fact not a priest, since she has just told him of her revelations.

[939] *Cross* for Julian means crucifix, a cross bearing a three-dimensional image of Christ.

[940] i.e., God.

pass out of my mind. Oh, look how wretched I was! This was a great sin and a great ingratitude, that I, through folly, because I felt a little bodily pain, so stupidly lost for the time being the comfort of all these blessed Showings from our Lord God. [LT66.2–3]

[4] Here you may see what I am in myself. But our courteous Lord would not leave me like this. And I lay still till night, trusting in his mercy, and then I began to sleep. / And as soon as I had fallen asleep, it seemed to me that the Fiend took me by the throat, and would have strangled me, but he could not. / *Then I woke from my sleep,* barely alive. [LT66.3 / 67.1 / 67.2]

[5] The people who were with me saw this and wet my temples, and my heart began to take comfort. And at once a little smoke came in at the door, together with a great heat and a foul stench.[941] And then I said, 'Blessed be the Lord,[942] is everything on fire, here?' For I supposed that there had been a real bodily fire that would have burned us all to death. I asked those who were with me if they could smell any stench, and they said, no, they could smell

[941] Smoke, heat, and a foul stench traditionally accompany manifestations of demons.

[942] Translating *Benedicite dominus*. This expression has occurred before, in ST3.3 and 5.2.

nothing.[943] I said, 'Blessed be God.' For then I knew for sure that it was the Fiend who had come to torment[944] me. [LT67.2]

[6] And immediately I remembered what our Lord had shown me that same day, together with all the faith of Holy Church, for I saw them both as one, and fled to them for my comfort.[945] And at once, everything vanished away, and I was brought to great rest and peace, free from sickness in my body or fear in my mind. [LT67.2]

Twenty-Two

But I remained awake, and then our good Lord opened my spiritual eye and showed me my soul in the middle of my heart. I saw *my* soul so wide as if it were a kingdom. And from the qualities I saw in it, *I thought* that it was an honourable city. In the middle of that city sits our Lord Jesus, true God, true man, a fair person, and of large stature, *honourable, highest* Lord. And I saw him

[943] Fire and the smell of burning sulphur had long been associated with the Devil and demonic works. See Rev 20:10, 'And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever' (NRSV).

[944] Translating *tempest*.

[945] See ST10.9.

clothed in stately honours. He sits squarely in the middle of the soul,[946] at peace and rest,[947] and he rules and guards Heaven and earth and all that is. The manhood sits at rest with the Godhead. The Godhead rules and guards without any help or effort. And *my* soul is *completely filled by the blessed Godhead,* who is sovereign might, sovereign wisdom and sovereign goodness. [LT68.1]

[2] Jesus shall never leave the place that he takes in our soul, without end. For in us is his homeliest home and **the most pleasing for him to dwell in.** [LT68.2]

[3] This was a delectable sight and a *restful one, for it is so, in truth, without end.* And the contemplation of this, while we are here in this life, is most pleasing to God and the greatest good fortune to us. And the soul that contemplates it thus makes itself like the one contemplated, and in rest and peace is united with him. That I saw him seated was a singular joy and bliss to me, *for the beholding of his sitting shows that he dwells there unendingly. And I knew truthfully* that it was he who had shown me everything that came earlier. [LT68.5]

---

[946] Following Watson and Jenkins.

[947] See 1 Cor 3:16, 'Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?' and 2 Cor 6:16, 'I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people' (NRSV).

[4] And when I had contemplated this with **careful** deliberation, then our Lord most gently conveyed these words to **me**, without using his voice and without opening his lips, just as he had done before, and said most gravely, 'Know it well, that it was no raving that you saw today. But take it and believe it, hold firmly to it, and you shall not be overcome.' These last words were said **to me** to instil absolute certainty that it was our Lord Jesus who had shown me everything. And just as with the first words that our good Lord revealed **to me**, referring to his blessed Passion, 'Through this is the Fiend overcome,'[948] he said these last words in just the same way, in complete faithfulness, 'You shall not be overcome.' And all this teaching and this true comfort is generally applicable to all my fellow Christians, *as I have* said before, and this is the will of God. [LT68.6]

[5] And these words, 'You shall not be overcome,' were said most intently and most forcefully for security and comfort against all tribulations that may come. He did not say, 'You shall not be troubled, you shall not suffer, you shall not be distressed,' but he said, 'You shall not be overcome.' God wants us to take heed *of his words* and that we always feel completely *safe* in our well-being and

[948] Already quoted in ST8.6.

sorrow. For he loves us and is pleased with us, and so he wants us to love him and be pleased with him and completely trust in him, and all shall be well. And soon everything came to a close, and I saw no more. [LT68.7–8]

Twenty-Three

After this the Fiend came again, with his heat and with his stench, and made me most anxious. The stench was so vile and so distressing, and the bodily heat was also terrible and tormenting. Also, I could hear the sound of chattering **and talking**, as if there had been two individuals, and both it seemed to me were chattering at the same time, as if they were having the most intense discussion, and all was soft whispering. And I did not understand what they said. And I thought this would drive me to despair. *I trusted completely in God and comforted* my soul by speaking aloud, just as I would have done for anyone else **other than myself** who was similarly burdened. I thought this anxiety could not be compared to any other. [LT69.1–2]

[2] I set my eyes upon the same cross that had comforted me earlier on, **I set** my tongue to speaking of Christ's Passion and rehearsing the faith of Holy

Church, and I fastened my heart[949] to God with all my trust and all my strength, so that I thought to myself, saying, 'You now have a great work to do. If now, from this time and ever more, you could be as busy in keeping yourself from sin, this would be a good and excellent occupation.' For I truly *believed* that were I safe from sin, I would be completely safe from all the fiends in Hell and the enemies of my soul. [LT70.1]

[3] And thus *they*[950] occupied me all that night and the next morning until it was after sunrise.[951] And at once they departed and were all gone, leaving nothing but that stink which lasted still a while. And I scorned *them,* and thus I was delivered from *them* by the power of Christ's Passion, for through that is the Fiend overcome, as our Lord Jesus Christ said **to me** before.[952] [LT70.2.]

[4] **Ah, wretched sin! What are you? You are nothing. For I saw that God is all things, but I did not see you. And when I saw that God has made**

---

[949] Fr John-Julian in his note to LT70 of the *Showings* remarks that Julian uses the word *heart* 24 times in the course of the Long Text, but that this term is never used with our modern meaning of *seat of the emotions*. For Julian the heart is the location of one's will and intellect, making it much closer to our modern concept of *mind*.

[950] i.e., the demons and their voices that she could hear.

[951] Translating *about pryme day*.

[952] In ST8.4–6.

everything, I did not see you. And when I saw that God is in all things, I did not see you. And when I saw that God does all things that are done, the lesser and the greater, I did not see you. And when I saw our Lord Jesus sitting in our soul so honourably, loving and liking and ruling and caring for all that he has made, I did not see you. And so I am sure that you are nothing, and all who love you and like you and follow you and willingly end in you, I am sure they shall be brought to nothing with you and endlessly confounded. God shield us all from you! Amen, for the love[953] of God.

[5] And what wretchedness is I will say, as I am taught by God's showing. Wretchedness is everything that is not good, the spiritual blindness that we fall into through our first sin, and all that follows from that wretchedness: sufferings and pains, of the spirit or body, and all that is on earth or in any other place which is not good. And from this it may be asked, 'What are we?' And to this I answer, 'If all that is not good were taken from us, we should be good. When wretchedness is taken from us, then are God and the soul all one, and God and man all one. 'What are all these things on earth that separate us [from God]?' I answer and say, 'In that something serves us, it is good, and in that

[953] Translating *charyte*.

something shall perish it is wretchedness, and in that a man sets his heart upon matters otherwise than in this way, it is sin.' And for the time that a man or a woman loves sin, if there be such, they endure suffering that surpasses all suffering. And when they do not love sin, but hate it, and love God, all is well. And he that truly does this, though he may sin sometimes through frailty or ignorance, he does not fall, for he wishes earnestly to rise again and behold God, whom he loves with all his might. God has made himself be loved by men or women who have been sinners.[954] **But always he loves, and always he longs to have our love. And when we earnestly and wisely love Jesus, we are at peace.**

[6] All this blessed teaching of our Lord God was shown **to me** in three ways, **as I said before,** that is to say, by bodily sight, and by words formed in my understanding, and by spiritual sight.[955] As for the bodily sight, I have reported what I saw as accurately as I can. And as for the words **that came,** I have reported them exactly as our Lord showed them to me. And as for the spiritual sight, I have spoken of it to some extent, but I may never fully tell it, and

[954] Emended in line with Watson and Jenkins. God has arranged matters such that those who love him are former sinners, and that despite their sins, people may have confidence in their love for God.

[955] Repeated from the beginning of ST7.1.

therefore regarding this spiritual sight I am stirred to say more, as God will give me grace. [LT73.1]

Twenty-Four

God showed **me** two kinds of sickness that we have, **of which he wants us to be cured.** One is impatience, for our troubles and our suffering weigh heavily upon us. The other is our despair or doubting fear, as I shall say later.[956] And these two are those that most trouble and torment us, according to what our Lord showed me, *and most pleasing to him is that we should be relieved of them.* I speak of such men and women who from the love of God hate sin and set themselves to do God's will. **These, then, are the two secret sins that most beset us.** Therefore it is God's wish that we know about them, and then we shall reject them, as we do other sins. [LT73.2]

[2] *And thus,* most meekly, our Lord showed **me** the patience that he had in his cruel Passion, and also

[956] In ST25.3. Impatience and sloth are associated by commentators in Julian's era as a type of spiritual apathy that may promote despair. 'Doubting fear' is a fear that results from doubting God's goodness. These are the only sins specifically identified by Julian, and as Fr John-Julian points out in his note to LT24, both these sins manifest a failure of faith and trust in God's love, and as such can be regarded as 'sins of being' rather than 'sins of doing'.

the joy and the delight that he has in that Passion because of love. And this he showed **me** by way of example, that we should gladly and without anxiety bear our sufferings, for this is most pleasing to him and unending advantage to us. And the reason as to why we are burdened with them comes from our ignorance of love. [LT73.3]

[3] Though the persons of the blessed Trinity are completely equal *in their attributes, it was their love that was most clearly shown to me* **as being nearest to us all.** And it is in this knowledge that we are most blind, for many *men and women* believe that God is almighty and may do everything, and that he is all wisdom and can do everything. But that he is all love and wishes to do everything, there *they* stop. [LT73.3]

[4] And this lack of knowledge is what most hinders those who love God, for when *they* begin to hate sin and amend *their* ways according to the laws of Holy Church, yet still there lingers a fear that *stirs them to think of themselves and their earlier sins.* And this fear *they mistake* for humility, but it is a foul blindness and a wickedness, yet we cannot despise it, **for if we knew this we should immediately despise it,** as we do other sins that we acknowledge, for it *comes from the Enemy* and it is contrary to truth. [LT73.4]

[5] For of all the properties of the blessed Trinity, it is God's wish that above all we have confidence in

delight and love. For love makes God's power and wisdom most benevolent to us. For just as through courtesy, God forgets our sin *after the time that* we repent, so does he wish that we forget our sin *and all our sorrow and all our doubting fears*. [LT73.4]

Twenty-Five

For I *saw* four kinds of fear. One is the fear of assault that comes over someone suddenly through frailty. This fear is good, for it helps to purify someone, as does bodily sickness or any other such pain that is not sin. For all such sufferings help someone if they are accepted patiently. [LT74.1]

[2] The second is fear of punishment whereby someone is stirred and wakened from the sleep of sin. For someone who is fast asleep in sin is not able for that time to receive the gentle comfort of the Holy Spirit until they have *received* this fear of punishment and the **fear of the fire of purgatory.** And this fear directs *him* to seek comfort and mercy from God. And this fear serves *him* as a gateway, and enables *him* to have contrition by the blessed touching of the Holy Spirit. [LT74.1]

[3] The third is doubting fear.[957] **For though it be little in itself, were it to be recognised it would be**

[957] The fear that arises when someone doubts that God's forgiveness will really be granted to them, introduced in the previous section.

seen as a species of despair. For I am sure that God hates all doubting fear, and he wishes that we drive it from us *with a true knowledge of love*. [LT74.1]

[4] The fourth is reverent fear,[958] for there is no fear in us that pleases God except reverent fear, and this is *most sweet and mild, because of the greatness of our love*. / And *yet* this reverent fear and love are not one thing, but two, and are distinct in their properties and working, and neither of them may be had without the other. Therefore I am sure that he who loves also fears, though he may feel it only a little. [LT74.1/74.2]

[5] All the fears that face us, other than reverent fear, although they may appear in the guise of holiness, they are not truly so, and this is how they may be *known, and we may discern which is which*. **For reverent fear, the more it is experienced, the more it softens and comforts and pleases and rests us, whereas false fear distresses and disturbs and disquiets us.** [LT74.3]

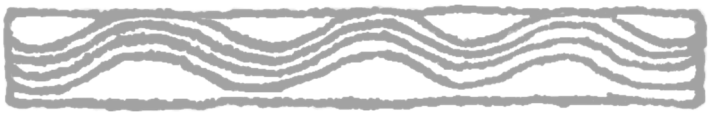
[6] This then is the remedy, to know them both, and reject the false, **just as we would reject a wicked spirit that showed himself in the likeness of a good angel. For even though an evil spirit may come in the guise and likeness of a good angel, however fair his conversation and behaviour, first he distresses and disturbs and disquiets the person he speaks with,**

[958] Translating *reverente drede* (i.e., 'dread').

and hinders him and leaves him all upset. And the more he comes to him, the more he torments him, and the further he is from peace. Therefore it is God's wish and to our advantage that we can tell them apart. [LT74.4]

[7] For God always wants us to be secure in love, and peaceful and restful, as he is towards us. And just as he is disposed towards us, he wants us to be of the very same condition with respect to ourselves, and to our fellow Christians. Amen.

[8] *Here ends [the book of] Julian of Norwich.*[959] [LT86.4]



[959] Translating *Explicit Juliane de Norwich.*

The 1953 reconstruction of St Julian's Church in Norwich, following the bombing in 1942 during World War Two, includes this shrine to Julian (on the right) built on foundations that may indicate the site of Julian's original anchor-hold which presumably fell into disrepair some-time after the Refor-mation. The photograph by Cameron Self may be found here bit.ly/2oN1ylr. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

EXTRACT FROM

The History of the City and County of Norwich (printed in Norwich in 1745), by Francis Blomefield (1705–1752), Rector of Fersfield in Norfolk, appearing in the section on Norwich in the entry for St Julian's Church at page 546, and later included in a multi-volume edition: *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk, Containing a Description of the Towns, Villages, and Hamlets, with the Foundations of Monasteries, Churches, Chapels, Chantries, and Other Religious Buildings: Also an Account of the Ancient and Present State of All the Rectories, Vicarages, Donatives, and Impropriations, Their Former and Present Patrons and Incumbents, with Their Several Valuations in the King's Books, Whether Discharged or Not: Likewise, an Historical Account of the Castles, Seats, and Manors, Their Present and Ancient Owners; Together with the Epitaphs, Inscriptions, and Arms in All the Parish Churches, and Chapels; With Several Draughts of Churches, Monuments, Arms, Ancient Ruins, and Other Relicks of Antiquity. Collected out of Ledger-Books, Registers, Records, Evidences, Deeds, Court-Rolls, and Other Authentick Memorials* whose publication by William Miller began in 1803 and continued until 1810.

In the Eaſt Part of this Church-yard ſtood an *Anchorage*, in which an *Ankereſs* or *Recluſe*, dwelt 'till the Diſſolution, when the Houſe was demoliſhed, tho' the Foundations may ſtill be ſeen: In 1393, Lady *Julian* the *Ankereſs* here, was a ſtrict *Recluſe*, and had 2 Servants to attend her in her old Age, A^{D}. 1443. This Woman, in thoſe Days, was eſteemed one of the greateſt Holyneſs. The Rev. Mr. *Francis Peck*, Author of the Antiquities of *Stanford*, had an old vellum Mss. 36 4to Pages of which, contain'd an Account of the Viſions &c. of this Woman, which begins thus, "Here es a "Viſion ſchewed be the Goodenes of GOD, to a devoute "Woman, and hir Name is JULIAN, that is *Recluſe* atte "*Norwyche*, and yitt ys on Life, Anno Domini M. CCCC. "XLII. [sic] In the whilke Viſion er fulle many comforta- "byll Wordes & greatly ſtyrrande to alle they that deſyres "to be CRYSTES Looverſe." In 1472, Dame *Agnes* was Recluſe here. In 1481, Dame *Eliz. Scott*. In 1510, Lady *Elizabeth*. In 1524, Dame *Agnes Edrygge*.

Now becauſe there were many of theſe *Anchorets* and *Anchoreſſes* in this City, & few know what they were, I ſhall obſerve, that they were a ſort of *Monks*, properly called *Anachorites*, from αναχωξεω, which ſignifies to retire, as they did, wholly out of the World: They were alſo term'd *Recluſes* or *Incluſes*, from their being ſhut up in their *Cells* or *Anchorages*; of theſe there were two ſorts, the *Eremite* or *Hermit*, ſo called from the EPHMOΣ or W*ilderneſs*, that he lived in, after the Example of *Elias*, and *John* the *Baptiſt*, And the *Recluſe* or *Anchoreſs*, who pretended to follow the Example of *Judith*.

Sourced from Internet Archive, bit.ly/42eXQBK (See p. 546.)

APPENDIX 2

Reassessing The Relationship Between Julian of Norwich's Short Text and Long Text

A Case of Editorial Intervention?

The conventional chronology positioning Julian's Short Text as an initial account later expanded into the Long Text warrants critical reassessment. A careful examination of manuscript evidence, theological content, and historical context especially, suggests an alternative interpretation: the Short Text may represent a later, redacted version of Julian's work, potentially shaped by editorial intervention during the repressive climate following Arundel's Constitutions (1407–1409).[960]

The manuscript evidence presents a compelling starting point for this reconsideration. The sole surviving Short Text (AMHERST 37790) bears a rubric dating the text to 1413, placing its appearance a full four decades after Julian's original visions of 1373 and six years after Arundel's draconian legislation against unorthodox religious writing. Significantly, this rubric does not attribute the text's composition to Julian herself, but

[960] For more on Arundel, see for instance Rolf 2013, 163–67, 592–3.

rather refers to Julian in the third person and presents it as a record of her revelations. This stands in marked contrast to the Long Text manuscripts, which clearly develop Julian's distinctive authorial voice and theological perspective. If the Short Text was created in 1413, its temporal proximity to the height of Arundel's censorship campaign raises important questions about its relationship to the much fuller Long Text version.

A systematic comparison of theological content reveals striking omissions in the Short Text that align suspiciously with Arundel's censorship priorities. Most notably absent are three of Julian's most distinctive and potentially controversial theological contributions. First, the profound analogy of Christ's motherhood, which occupies a central position in the Long Text (Chapters 58–62, especially), disappears entirely. While theologically orthodox, this metaphor risked association with condemned mystics such as Marguerite Porete.[961] Second, the intricate Lord and Servant parable, which offers a nuanced theology of sin and redemption in LT51 – rejecting the doctrine of original sin – would have been seen as challenging established penitential theology.[962] Third, while the Short Text retains

[961] Marguerite Porete (d. 1310) was a French mystic burned for heresy for her book *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, which described souls achieving direct union with God beyond Church sacraments. Hers was the only recorded execution of a female mystic during the medieval Inquisition's campaign against Beguine spirituality and exemplified the dangers of unorthodox mysticism in Julian's era. Julian's careful framing of similar ideas (e.g., divine union) in orthodox terms may reflect awareness of Porete's fate under ecclesiastical scrutiny.

[962] Penitential theology focuses on acts of confession – repentance, and absolution – particularly in the Catholic Church, where it is considered

Julian's famous assurance that 'All shall be well', it carefully excises her more expansive exploration of how this divine promise might encompass all souls. These systematic omissions suggest not merely a random abridgment, but deliberate theological pruning of precisely the sort of unorthodox content targeted by Arundel's legislation.[963]

Importantly, the Short Text contains one particularly telling addition not found in the Long Text: the abrupt disclaimer,

> But God forbid that you should say or take it that I am a teacher! For I do not mean to be, nor did I ever mean to be. For I am a woman, uneducated, feeble and frail.
>
> (ST6.4)

This defensive interpolation, appearing without precedent in Julian's fuller work, directly mirrors contemporary mandates requiring women to explicitly disclaim authoritative teaching roles. Its presence strongly suggests an editorial hand seeking

---

a sacrament, and involves the individual acknowledging sins, seeking forgiveness, and fulfilling prescribed acts of penance. This theological framework emphasises the need to regain God's grace to attain salvation. Fundamentally, it is transactional: if the penitent does the right things, God will come up with the desired goods ... eternal salvation.

[963] Julia Bolton Holloway, one of the few scholars who holds the view that the ST was created later (or significantly later) than the LT, cites these omissions with reference to the 'life threatening constraints' of the Constitutions, but also with respect to creating a much simpler text that dispenses with the structure of the sixteen Showings (Holloway 2003, xxxi). She also conjectures that the ST manuscript may contain instances of Julian's handwriting where the text has been corrected by a hand that is not that of the scribe.

to pre-empt accusations of unlicensed spiritual instruction, specifically prohibited under Arundel's Constitutions 5 and 7. This single interpolation encapsulates the broader pattern of cautious revision evident throughout the Short Text.

The historical context of early fifteenth-century England provides crucial insight into why such editorial intervention might have occurred. By 1413, Lollard persecutions had reached their peak, and even theologically orthodox women like Margery Kempe faced intense scrutiny and accusations of heresy. In this climate of suspicion, a redactor might well have made strategic decisions to ensure the text's survival. The Short Text's exclusive focus on Christ's Passion – always a safe devotional subject – whilst avoiding more speculative theology, represents precisely the sort of cautious self-censorship that became necessary under Arundel's regime. Similarly, the text's concise format may reflect not authorial immaturity (as many scholars today believe), but rather practical considerations for safer and more discreet circulation among trusted readers.

This reassessment fundamentally alters our understanding of Julian's literary legacy. If the Short Text represents a later redaction rather than an early draft, then the Long Text emerges not as an expansion of an earlier text, but as preserving Julian's original, uncensored theological vision. This interpretation aligns with scholarly arguments about the Long Text's structural and theological sophistication.[964] In this reading, the

[964] See for instance Colledge and Walsh 1978, Vol 1, 43–7; Baker 1974, 68–72; Watson 1993, 662–5. These scholars point to the Long Text's integration of scholastic methods – including systematic analogy (e.g., Christ as Mother), parabolic exegesis (the Lord and the Servant), and quaestio-style dialectic (e.g., reconciling sin with divine love) – which

Short Text becomes a necessarily truncated adaptation, one that both protected Julian's reputation and safeguarded her readers during dangerous times, while simultaneously concealing her most profound theological insights. This textual history reminds us that the medieval Church's campaign against heresy did more than burn books; in this instance, at least, there is a sound case for its forcing a text into protective disguise for the sake of that text's survival, with Julian's full voice waiting centuries to emerge from its cocoon of cautious redaction with the publication in 1901 by Grace Warrack of the first translation of Julian's Long Text in modern English – her *Revelations of Divine Love*[965] which paved the way for the plethora of Julian publications later in the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

Few scholars have challenged the prevailing consensus that the Short Text is the earlier of Julian's writings, reflecting her initial account of the revelations soon after they occurred. One notable exception is Nicholas Watson. Whilst he does not explicitly argue that Julian's Short Text is a redacted version of the Long Text, his analysis provides a framework that accommodates such a reading. Watson challenges the traditional chronology by proposing that the Long Text may have been written much later than has been previously assumed, based on internal evidence and its theological development.[966] He highlights the Short Text's rhetorical humility and emphasis on orthodox

demonstrate a level of theological synthesis that suggests mature compositional development, complete in its own right, and is not simply an expanded text from a preliminary draft.

[965] Warrack 1901.

[966] Watson 1993, 641–2.

belief – particularly Julian's self-characterisation as 'leued, febille, & freylle' – as reflective of ecclesiastical pressures faced by women vernacular theologians.[967]

Although Watson does not directly connect the Short Text to the censorship mechanisms of Arundel's Constitutions of 1407–1409, he places Julian's writing within a context of heightened clerical suspicion, where theological caution would have been both prudent and necessary. Accordingly, his argument allows for the possibility that the Short Text represents a theologically cautious adaptation of the Long Text, shaped by the ideological demands of early fifteenth-century orthodoxy and thus diverging from the full theological richness of the Long Text on which it was based.

These observations do not preclude the possibility that Julian once composed an earlier, now-lost account soon after her visions. They do, however, make it increasingly difficult to sustain the supposition that the extant Short Text preserves that first attempt. A reading that understands the Short Text as a later, defensive redaction sits more comfortably with the manuscript evidence, the patterns of omission, and the fraught ecclesiastical landscape of the early fifteenth century. In this light, the Long Text emerges not as an expansion, but as the fuller witness to Julian's theological insights – the version in which her voice is least encumbered by the demands of her age. Recognising this possibility adds depth to our understanding of Julian's legacy and invites further study of the forces that shaped the survival of her work.

✠

[967] Watson 1993, 648.

GLOSSARY

Julian's Vision

Essential Themes and Meanings

(The topics gathered here are representative, not comprehensive, and the references to Julian's texts are likewise selective. Many topics are returned to at intervals, sometimes frequently, across Julian's *Showings*. Text in **bold type** indicates cross-references within the Glossary.)

All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well

This is perhaps the most famous of Julian's sayings expressing an eschatological[968] hope that despite present suffering and sin, divine love ensures ultimate restoration. This does not mean suffering is trivial but, in God's eternal plan, it will

[968] From ἔσχατος (*eschatos*), meaning last, final, utmost or extreme. Eschatology is that branch of theology dealing with the world's ending, the end times, our own deaths, and God's judgement on the Last Day.

be reconciled. Her saying is radical in its optimism, particularly in contrast to prevailing medieval fears of damnation and punishment. In the preface to her translation of the *Showings*, Julia Bolton Holloway (2003, xii) is confident that Julian's 'all shall be well' purposefully translates the Hebrew שָׁלוֹם, *shalom*,[969] believing that Julian's education had included instruction in Hebrew and that she could read the Old Testament in its original language.

(LT27.2/3, 31.1, 32.1, 34.3, 35.1, 63.5, 68.7; ST13.10, 15.1/5, 16.2/3, 22.5.)

Atonement

In Julian's century, the dominant Catholic account of atonement was the 'satisfaction model' shaped by Anselm (1033/34–1109) and later refined by Aquinas (1225–1274). According to this understanding, human sin had violated God's honour and justice in a way that created a debt far beyond humanity's ability to resolve. Only Christ – fully human and fully divine – could offer a response of sufficient worth to restore the balance. His Passion was therefore seen as an act of satisfaction rendered to God on humanity's behalf, repairing the breach that sin had caused.

(LT29.2, 52.7; ST14.2.)

[969] The primary meaning of *shalom* is peace, harmony, the absence of conflict and by extension meaning *wholeness* or *completeness* (in the sense of physical or spiritual well-being); Holloway writes (2003, xviii): ' ... *shalom* being ... a totalizing of wellness, goodness, oneness, creation and Creator in harmony.'

Even cristens

This is a relatively common term in Middle English, meaning 'fellow Christians' or 'fellow believers' – those who are equal in faith and united in Christ. What is true of one is true of all. This sense of 'even' is present in modern English in such expressions as 'even-handed', 'even chance', 'keep at an even temperature', for instance.

(LT8.4–5, 9.1–2, 28.1, 37.1–2, 68.6.)

God is all that is good, and the goodness that everything has is God

This establishes a metaphysical and theological truth that equates all goodness with God's being. This affirms a non-dualistic vision of reality where God is not merely the source of goodness but is goodness itself, in which our experience of evil is somehow, in God's vision, subsumed into that goodness. It reflects an Augustinian–Platonic view that evil is not a thing in itself but a privation of good. Julian's optimism shines through – she sees all of creation as permeated by divine goodness.

(LT5.8, 8.2, 9.2, 35.2; ST4.6, 5.3, 6.2.)

God is our clothing

Julian conjures a vivid metaphor of divine love as an all-encompassing presence that is intimately close, surrounding us like clothing. It suggests warmth, protection, and a strikingly maternal form of divine love. This challenges hierar-

chical notions of God as a distant ruler and instead offers an image of enveloping, motherly, care. (LT5.1; ST4.1.)

God's courtesy

Julian repeatedly speaks of the *courtesy* of God, a medieval term connoting noble generosity, gracious humility, and refined kindness. God's dealings with humanity, she says, are marked not by domination but by God's love, gentleness, and respect. Christ's humility in the Passion especially exemplifies this divine courtesy: he submits to suffering out of love, not compulsion, and meets human weakness with patience rather than wrath. This challenges harsher views of divine judgement, replacing them with a vision of God whose actions always reflect the highest courtesy.

(LT4.3, 7.4–6, 10.10, 14.1/4, 26.1, 74.4 75.5, 77.6, 79.3, 83.1; ST7.2, 13.5.)

God does all things

This affirms divine omnipotence, implying that all actions and events – even suffering – are within God's will and purpose. It challenges a dualistic view in which evil stands apart from divine control. However, Julian's perspective does not encourage a fatalistic outlook, but rather inspires trust that even suffering and distress, all turmoils and vexations somehow or other serve a higher divine purpose. This we will all see for ourselves when in receipt of God's **great deed**. Julian's understanding resonates with Neoplatonic ideas where all existence flows from God and is ultimately drawn back

to him.[970] It also aligns with Meister Eckhart's idea that God is the ground of being, in whom all things participate.[971]

(LT11.1; ST8.2; see also LT5.2, 8.2, 11.1–3/5–7, 31.1, 34.3; ST4.2, 5.3, 23.4.)

God dwells in the city at the centre of our soul

Julian's image of the soul as a city with God at its centre reflects her deeply incarnational and mystical theology, where God is not distant but intimately present with us and within us. This vision aligns with her belief that **God is the ground of our being**, always sustaining and dwelling within the soul. The city metaphor suggests order, harmony, and divine governance, emphasising that our spiritual life is structured around God's presence. This resonates with medieval mystical traditions depicting the soul as a dwelling place for God,[972] yet Julian uniquely emphasises that this indwelling is not conditional on human worthiness but is

[970] See, for instance, *The Enneads* of Plotinus, one of the primary philosophers of Neoplatonism, who expounds the idea that all of existence flows from the One (which he equates with God) and ultimately returns to it in a process of spiritual ascent. This view is central to Neoplatonic philosophy.

[971] See, for instance, Meister Eckhart, *The Essential Sermons, Writings, and Sayings*, translated by Raymond B. Blakney (New York: Paulist Press, 1981). In this collection, Eckhart often speaks of God as the ground of all being, emphasising the idea that everything in creation participates in God, and that God is the source and sustainer of all things. This theme is especially prominent in his sermons.

[972] Found, for instance, in Augustine's *City of God* or later in Teresa of Ávila's *Interior Castle*.

the unshakable reality of divine love. Even in suffering and sin, we are always kept safe in God's loving embrace.

(LT68.1; ST22.1: see also LT55.3, 56.2.)

God is the ground of our being

That God is the ground of our being is a central affirmation in Julian's theology, expressing her understanding that God is both the origin and the sustaining foundation of all created existence. To say that 'God is our ground' (LT34.2, 56.1) and 'the ultimate source of being' (LT56.4), is to declare that our being depends wholly upon God's continuous love and presence; were it not for this divine ground continually sustaining us, our being would at once cease, for apart from God there is no existence at all.

Through this image Julian conveys her conviction that the divine is not distant or external to creation, but immanent within it – the very condition of its existence. The soul's being and God's being are therefore not separate, but united in origin and ultimate purpose. In this sense, her thought foreshadows later philosophical expressions such as Paul Tillich's 'ground of being';[973] yet Julian's usage remains thoroughly theological, devotional, and experiential.

For her, this truth is not a matter of abstract speculation but of lived awareness: the ground of being is felt as the steadfast, nurturing love that continually holds all things in existence. It is this love – constant, enveloping, and without

[973] See especially, *The Courage to Be*.

change – that is both the very being of all things and the power that sustains them. (LT39.4, 49.1, 62.2, 78.1.)

God is the ground of our beseeching

God explains to Julian that even our desire to pray comes from him, suggesting that prayer is not merely a human action directed towards God, but something initiated and sustained by God within us. Prayer, then, is a divine gift. Julian does not see prayer as a means of changing God's will, but as a participation in divine action. If God is the 'ground' (foundation) of our beseeching, then even our longing for God originates in God himself. This idea aligns with Augustine's famous prayer: 'You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.'[974] Just as our deepest desires are shaped by God, so too is our impulse to seek him in prayer; it is not something we generate through effort, but rather God plants the very desire to pray within us. This aligns with medieval mystical traditions, where prayer is seen less as petitioning and more as a movement of the soul towards divine union. Meister Eckhart, for instance, similarly emphasises that true prayer is not about asking for things, but about aligning with God's presence.[975] If God is the ground of our beseeching, then even the act of seeking God is in fact a sign that he is already at work within us. (LT41.2–4, 42.5, 86.1; ST19.3.)

[974] *Confessions*, Book 1, Chapter 1.

[975] See *German Sermon 4*, 'On True and Perfect Prayer,' in *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, trans. Maurice O'C. Walshe, p. 183.

God holds us most preciously when we feel most forsaken

God takes care of us when we are all but forsaken and feel cast away because of our sin or the torment of adversity. This counters the idea that our suffering signals divine abandonment: it does not. This sense of being forsaken resonates with the experience of Christ's despairing cry on the cross, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'[976] implying that even in perceived desolation, God's love is nevertheless actively at work. (LT39.2 49.3; ST9.8, 19.2.)

God is nearer to us than our own soul

Here is a statement of deep intimacy between God and the soul, emphasising divine immanence. Unlike the common medieval view of a distant, wrathful God, Julian insists that God is intimately present, even more so than our own self-awareness. This is mystical in nature, suggesting that union with God is not something to be achieved but is already, fundamentally, real. (LT56.1.)

God is our mother

Julian speaks sweetly and plainly of God as our true Mother. She writes that it is Christ who bears us in pain and joy, who feeds us with his body and blood, and who watches over us with tender care. As a mother does not forget her child, so Christ will never forget us. His love is close, homely and

[976] Matt 27:46 and Mk 15:34, quoting Ps 22.1.

unwearied, clothing us in mercy and teaching us with gentleness. In Christ our Mother, Julian sees both the strength to save and the kindness to comfort, and she bids us rest ever more deeply in this love, sure that we are endlessly cherished.

(See especially LT59–61; see also LT52.1, 54.3, 57.4, 58.2–5, 62.2–3, 63.3–4, 64.1, 74.3, 84.3.[977])

Great deed

This is Julian's term for the divine work that will be accomplished at the end of time, by which all that is now hidden or unresolved in creation will be brought to completion and made manifest in joy. The great deed is first mentioned in connection with Julian's questioning of how **'all shall be well'** can be true when sin and suffering are so evident in the world (LT32.3–5, 36.3–4/6).[978] Christ responds, saying, 'what is impossible for you is not impossible for me. I shall uphold my word in all things, and I shall make all things well.' The great deed is what will fulfil this undertaking.

This promise signifies not a single historical event but the final and total act of divine restoration – the moment when all things are gathered into harmony with God's will. Julian is not told what the deed will be, only that it will be done by Christ, and that through it 'all shall be well'. The great deed thus represents the culmination of divine mercy and wisdom, reconciling every contradiction and transform-

[977] Notice that God as Mother is not mentioned in ST.

[978] The great deed is not mentioned in ST.

ing all that seems lost or broken. It stands as the eschatological fulfilment of Julian's vision: the assurance that God's love will bring all creation to its rightful end in peace and joy. See also: ***All shall be well, Sin is behovely.***

I did not see sin

Julian did not see sin, she believes, because there is nothing there to be seen, because sin has no substance or ultimate reality in God's eyes. Rather than being part of God's creation, sin is a kind of absence or separation – but one that God will ultimately heal. Her focus is on divine love and mercy, suggesting that sin does not define humanity's true nature or play a part in God's final judgement.

(LT27.3=ST13.10; LT34.3=ST16.2.)

In well-being and woe

For Julian, *well-being* and *woe* are not opposites to be reconciled, but coexisting realities woven into every life, even the life of faith. The phrase captures the full range of human experience, from joy to suffering. Julian uses it to emphasise that both happiness and hardship are deeply known by God and are embraced within divine love. Rather than seeing suffering as meaningless or purely negative, Julian presents it as something that, along with joy, is part of a larger divine purpose. In her vision, both well-being and woe contribute to the soul's growth and deeper understanding of God's love. This idea reflects Julian's broader theme that 'all shall

be well', meaning that ultimately, everything – including pain – will find its place in a greater harmony.

(See for instance LT15.3, 19.3; ST9.8, 11.1.)

The little thing

Julian famously sees a little thing, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of her hand. She marvels at its fragility and asks what it is. The answer she receives is that it is *all that is made*. She wonders how such a small, delicate thing can endure, and is told that it lasts and ever shall last because God loves it. This vision epitomises Julian's theology of creation: the world is small and fragile, yet utterly sustained in God's love, created out of nothing and preserved solely by divine will. The *little thing* embodies Julian's radical trust that nothing exists outside the care of God.

(LT5.2–4; ST4.2–3/6.)

The Lord and Servant parable

Julian's 'example' of the Lord and the Servant in LT51 is among the most imaginative and searching passages in the *Showings*. In it she offers a sustained meditation on the relationship between God and humanity, and on the mysterious workings of divine love in the midst of human frailty. The vision begins with a noble Lord, seated in quiet dignity and peace, and a Servant standing attentively before him, eager to do his Lord's bidding. Out of pure devotion, the Servant leaps forward 'in great haste', but his enthusiasm results in his immediately crashing down into a gully where he lies

injured, disoriented, and unable to rise. But his greatest anguish, Julian observes, lies not simply in his pain but in his 'loss of reassurance' for, in the depths of the gully, he cannot lift his face to behold his Lord's loving countenance (LT51.1–2).

Yet the Lord does not reproach him for his failure. Instead, he regards the fallen Servant with unwavering tenderness (LT51.4) and promises not only healing but a restoration surpassing what the Servant would have known had he never fallen (LT51.5). This divine courtesy becomes the interpretive key to the entire parable. Over a period of twenty years 'save three months', Julian receives an 'inner teaching' (LT51.7–8) revealing that the Servant signifies both Adam – that is, all humanity – and Christ in his Incarnation (LT51.8, 18). The one who falls and the one who saves are thus held together in the single figure of the Servant. Christ descends with Adam, shares his wounds[979] (LT51.19–20), and through that very solidarity lifts him – and all who are one with him (including us) – into 'everlasting joy and bliss' (LT51.5, 21, 25–26).

The Lord's sitting in stillness 'on the earth, barren and empty' further discloses God's steadfast fidelity – refusing, as he does, to abandon the 'city' he has chosen as his dwelling-place (LT51.10, 12).

Read within Julian's wider theology, the parable becomes one of her clearest signposts towards universal restoration. The Lord's determination to bring the Servant into 'unend-

[979] That is, the pain and suffering that comes to us all at some point in our lives are the very same as Christ's pain and suffering on the cross.

ing bliss' (LT51.5), Christ's intimate unity with all who shall be saved (LT51.18–21), and the unchanging constancy of divine love (LT51.9–11) together reveal a God whose purpose is not to condemn but to heal, and whose patient compassion ensures that, in the end, all shall be saved.

Oneing

A central term in Julian's theology is *oneing* (pronounced 'wunning') – the union of the soul with God. For Julian, salvation is not merely deliverance from sin, but a profound joining of the human soul with divine love, a process that begins now and is fulfilled in eternity. In *oneing*, the soul rests in God as its true home, inseparable and secure. This unity is not earned but freely given, flowing from God's love and grounded in the reality that **God is nearer to us than our own soul.** The language of *oneing* expresses Julian's mystical vision that human destiny is full union with God, a state in which **all shall be made well,** in which state we will directly apprehend this fact. (We usually translate *oned/oneing* by 'united'/'uniting'.)

(See LT5.3, 19.4, 40.1, 41.4, 42.1, 43.5, 46.3, 49.1/5, 53.2/5, 55.4, 56.1/2, 57.2/3, 58.1/5, 68.5, 78.1/3, 80.3, 83.1; ST4.3, 6.2, 19.8, 22.3.)

Our life is all grounded and rooted in love

Here is Julian's fundamental assertion that love is the ground of all reality. This is the foundation of her theology: love is not merely a divine attribute but the underlying prin-

ciple of existence itself. This aligns with 1 Jn 4:8, 'God is love', yet extends beyond it, suggesting that love is not only something we receive from God but the very framework, the very ontological core of reality itself. (LT49.1, 63.4.)

Our soul is a city where God sits at its centre

Julian's image of the soul as a city with God at its centre reflects her deeply incarnational and mystical theology, where God is not distant but intimately present with us and within us. This vision aligns with her belief that **God is the ground of our being**, always sustaining and dwelling within the soul. The city metaphor suggests order, harmony, and divine governance, emphasising that our spiritual life is structured around God's presence. This resonates with medieval mystical traditions depicting the soul as a dwelling place for God,[980] yet Julian uniquely emphasises that this indwelling is not conditional on human worthiness, but is the unshakable reality of divine love. Even in suffering and sin, we are always kept safe in God's loving embrace.

(LT68.1; ST22.1: see also LT55.3, 56.2.)

Prayer

For Julian, prayer is both a divine gift and a human response, rooted in God's love. She insists that **God is the ground of our beseeching,** meaning that even the impulse

[980] Found, for instance, in Augustine's *City of God* and later in Teresa of Ávila's *Interior Castle*.

to pray comes from God's initiative within us. Prayer is not about changing God's will, but about aligning ourselves with God's divine purpose and resting in God's presence which dwells in the city at the centre of our soul. Julian emphasises that prayer is never wasted: God treasures every prayer, answers in ways beyond our comprehension, and will ultimately bring all to fulfilment in the assurance that **all shall be well**.

(LT41–2, 43.1, 86.1; ST19.3, 19.4–7.)

Reverent Fear

Julian frequently speaks of *fear*,[981] but she redefines it in striking terms. It is not terror of divine wrath (for she insists **there can be no wrath in God)** but rather a reverent awe before God's majesty and holiness. She pairs *dread* with love**,** seeing the two as companions: love draws us tenderly towards God, whilst reverent dread keeps us humble and aware of our dependence on him. This balanced vision softens harsher medieval notions of fear of God, recasting it as a disposition of profound respect and worship before the mystery of God's love and the majesty of his creation.

(LT65.4, 74.1–3/5, 75.3–5, 76.1, 83.2; ST25.4.)

Sin

For Julian, sin is one of the most searching themes of her *Showings*. While her contemporaries often understood sin chiefly in terms of guilt, punishment, and divine wrath, Jul-

[981] Translating *drede*, dread.

ian reframes it within the wider reality of God's love and providence. Sin, she says, is 'all that is not good' and 'the cause of all suffering' (LT27.2–3), encompassing both moral and natural evils. Though inherently destructive, it is not the final word in creation's story. Christ tells her that 'sin is inevitable' (LT27.2), yet through it God's mercy is made known and divine goodness more deeply revealed. Sin, therefore, becomes mysteriously necessary for the fulfilment of God's purposes: 'sin shall be no shame to man, but to his honour' (LT38.1). For Julian, even sin is enfolded in God's redeeming love, and the assurance that **'all shall be well'** (LT27.2) expresses her radical hope in the ultimate restoration of all things.

Sin is behovely, but all shall be well

Behovely[982] suggests that sin has a place within God's providential order, even though, for us, sin remains a source of suffering. This does not mean sin is ultimately good, but that it plays a role in the divine order – perhaps as a means through which people learn how to be human and grow towards God. The paradox is that although sin causes suffering, God can all the same bring good from it. This is a radical departure from harsher medieval views that emphasised punishment and damnation. (LT27.2; ST13.9.)

[982] Necessary or fitting; in this edition translated as *inevitable*, aiming to capture a sense of sin's unavoidable and inescapable presence in the world.

Substance and Sensuality

Julian understands the human soul as having two parts, which she calls substance and sensuality. By *substance*, she means the soul's deepest and truest being – its essential self (*oure kindely substance*, our natural substance; LT45.1). This is the part of us that is made directly by God and remains forever united with him. It cannot be corrupted or separated from divine love, for it shares in God's own unchanging nature. (LT4.3, 19.5, 54.1/3–4, 55.3/4, 57.1/4, 58.5; ST4.3, 19.5.)

Sensuality, on the other hand, refers to the part of us that lives in time and engages with the world through our senses. Through our sensuality we feel pleasure and pain, and we can fall into sin, confusion or despair. It is the part of ourselves that both experiences the world and interacts with it; yet it is also through this same part that God's grace works to teach, heal, and draw us back to him.

Julian's insight is that these two parts are not two different types of soul, but two dimensions of the same soul: 'For by God's making we are twofold, that is to say, in our substance and in our sensuality' (LT45.1/3). The relationship between substance and sensuality reflects, for her, the mystery of Christ himself – divine and human, perfectly united in one being. (See also LT54.4, 56.2, 57.3, 58.3.)

There can be no wrath in God ... and I saw no wrath except on man's part

This is one of Julian's most striking theological claims. It rejects the idea of God as wrathful, asserting that wrath is a human projection rather than a divine reality. This challenges common medieval understanding of divine justice and foreshadows later theological movements that emphasise God's love over retribution.[983]

(LT13.3, 40.1, 45.2, 46.3, 47.1, 48.1/4, 49.2–5; see especially LT46–9.)

We are kept in God in bliss while we are in pain

Even in the midst of suffering, we are kept secure and safe through the mercy of God. Another paradoxical statement, it suggests that even in suffering, God is present with us and that we always remain within the bounds of his divine love. Julian does not deny the reality of suffering, but reframes it – pain exists, but it is not proof that we are separated from God, or that God has abandoned us.

(LT15.4, 49.4, 65.4; ST9.8, 20.6.)

[983] Julian's emphasis on God's love, mercy, and the ultimate reconciliation of all things foreshadows several later theological movements, including Universalism, the Radical Reformation, Anabaptist theology, Quakerism, aspects of Romantic and Existentialist thought, and, in the last century, Liberation and Process theology.

You shall not be overcome

This promise from God does not suggest that Julian (and all her **even cristens**) will be spared pain, trials, or even despair, but that through all tribulations, they will not be ultimately defeated or separated from God's divine love. No matter how dark or overwhelming life may become, God's presence remains steadfast, and the soul's union with the divine cannot be broken. This assurance confirms that beneath all the turmoil and suffering of our lives – be it occasional, severe, mild or enduring – lies an unshakeable foundation of divine love, ever-present, always available to us.

(LT68.6–7, 70.4; ST22.4–5.)

✠

BIBLIOGRAPHY

~ *Original texts in Middle English*

Baker, Denise N. 2005. *Julian of Norwich: Showings*. New York: Norton. [PARIS.]

Colledge, Edmund and James Walsh. 1978. *A Book of Showings to the Anchoress Julian of Norwich*. 2 vols. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies. [AMHERST and LONG TEXT based on PARIS collated with all MSS.]

Crampton, Georgia Ronan. 1993. *The Shewings of Julian of Norwich*. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University. available at bit.ly/4ovCw5E [SLOANE 2499.]

Glasscoe, Marion. 1993 [1976]. *Julian of Norwich: A Revelation of Love*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press. [SLOANE 2499.]

Reynolds, Sister Anna Maria, C. P. and Julia Bolton Holloway. 2001. *Julian of Norwich, Showing of Love: Extant Texts and Translation*. Florence: SISMEL, Edizioni del Galluzzo. [AMHERST, PARIS, SLOANE 2499, WESTMINSTER, presented as typographical facsimiles.]

Watson, Nicholas and Jacqueline Jenkins. 2006. *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press. [AMHERST and synthetic LONG TEXT drawing on all MSS, plus analytic SHORT TEXT showing relationship to LONG TEXT.]

Windeatt, Barry. 2016. *Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [SLOANE 2499, AMHERST.]

~ *Online*

PARIS Anglaise 40 (*XVI Revelations of Divine Love*, the first print edition of Julian, published in 1670 in Paris by Serenus de Cressy) is available to view on the website of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, at bit.ly/3jhLPca

SLOANE 2499 can be viewed on the digitised manuscripts website of the British Library at bit.ly/4l6NonD, and SLOANE 3705 can be viewed at bit.ly/40GmOds

AMHERST 37790 can also be viewed on the same digitised resource, at bit.ly/3D0bLD5 (Julian's *Vision* begins at folio 97r.)

Dods, Marcus. 1869. *The City of God*. Vol 2. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. Available at Project Gutenberg, bit.ly/4jU4mF0

~ *Complete Translations*

Beer, Frances. 1998. *Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love and the Motherhood of God*. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer. [AMHERST and an excerpt from SLOANE 2499 (incorrectly identified on title page as SLOANE 2477).]

Blackhouse, Halcyon and Rhona Pipe. 1987. *Revelations of Divine Love: Julian of Norwich*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Colledge, Edmund and James Walsh. 1978. *Julian of Norwich: Showings*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Father John–Julian, OJN. 1988. *A Lesson of Love: The Revelations of Julian of Norwich*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

———. 2009. *The Complete Julian of Norwich*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press.

Harford, D. 1911. *Comfortable Words for Christ's Lovers*. London: H. R. Allenson. (reprint 1912; 3rd ed. 1925, titled *The Shewings of Lady Julian, Recluse of Norwich*. This is an edition translating the AMHERST manuscript, the Short Text.)

Holloway, Julia Bolton. 2003. *Julian of Norwich: Showing of Love*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Hudleston, Roger. 1952 [1927]. *Revelations of Divine Love: Julian of Norwich* (2nd edition). London: Burns Oates.

Millett, Bella. 2009. *Ancrene Wisse: Guide for Anchoresses, A Translation*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

Sanna, Ellyn. 2011. *All Shall Be Well: The Showings of Julian of Norwich*. New York: Anamchara Books.

Skinner, John. 1996. *Julian of Norwich: A Revelation of Love*. Leominster: Gracewing.

Spearing, Elizabeth. 1998. *Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love*. introduction and notes by A. C. Spearing. London: Penguin Books.

Starr, Mirabai. 2014. *Julian of Norwich: The Showings – A contemporary translation*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.

Walsh, James. 1961. *A The Revelations of Divine Love of Julian of Norwich*. London: Burns & Oates.

Warrack, Grace. 1901. *Revelations of Divine Love, Recorded by Julian, Anchoress at Norwich*. London: Methuen.

Windeatt, Barry. 2015. *Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

~ *Discussions*

Baker, Denise Nowakowski. 1974. *Julian of Norwich's Showings: From Vision to Book*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Barker, 2014. *1381 The Year of the Peasants' Revolt*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Bradley, Ritamary. 1992. *Julian's Way: A Practical Commentary on Julian of Norwich*. London: HarperCollins*Religious*.

Clay, Rotha Mary. 1914. *The Hermits and Anchorites of England*. London: Methuen.

Cooper, Austin. 1987. *Julian of Norwich: Reflections on Sacred Texts*. London: Burns and Oates.

Cre, M. ed. 2008. *The Medieval Translator, Vol 9: Vernacular Mysticism in the Charterhouse*. Brepols N.V.

Dahill, Lisa E. ed. 2008. *40-Day Journey with Julian of Norwich*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Books.

Duffy, Eamon. 2006. Religious Belief. in Horrox and Ormrod 2006, 293–339.

Dyer, Christopher. 2000. *Everyday Life in Medieval England*. London: Hambledon and London.

———. 2002. *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Britain 850–1520*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Finch, Jonathan. 2006. The Churches. in Rawcliffe and Wilson 2006, 49–72.

Fruehwirth, Robert. 2016. *The Drawing of this Love*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.

de Gruchy, Isobel. 2012. *Making All Things Well: Finding Spiritual Strength with Julian of Norwich*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.

Hall, Amy Laura. 2018. *Laughing at the Devil: Seeing the World with Julian of Norwich*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Harper-Bill, Christopher. ed. 2005. *Medieval East Anglia*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Harper-Bill, Christopher and Carole Rawcliffe. 2004. The Religious Houses. in Rawcliffe and Wilson 2004, 73–119.

Hide, Kerrie. 2001. *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment: The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Hilton, Rodney. 2003 [1973]. *Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Movements and the English Rising of* 1381. London: Routledge.

Holloway, Julia Bolton. 2016. *Julian Among the Books: Julian of Norwich's Theological Library*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.

Horrox, Rosemary, and W. Mark Ormrod, eds. 2006. *A Social History of England*, 1200–1550. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hryniewicz, Waclaw. 2003. Thomas Merton and Julian of Norwich: Mysticism and universalism of salvation. *Studio Mertoniana* 2: 111–34, at bit.ly/3G3aAUT = https://thomasmertonsociety.org/Studia2/Hryniewicz.pdf

Hudson, Anne. 1988. *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hughes-Edwards, Mari. 2010. Anchoritism: the English tradition. in McAvoy 2010, 131–52.

Huxley, Aldous. 1946. *The Perennial Philosophy*. London: Chatto & Windus.

Jantzen, Grace. 2000. *Julian of Norwich*. London: SPCK.

Jones, E. A. 2019. *Hermits and Anchorites in England*, 1200–1550. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Krantz, M. Diane F. 1997. *The Life and Text of Julian of Norwich: The Poetics of Enclosure*. New York: Peter Lang.

Kuschel, Karl-Josef. 1994. *Laughter: A Theological Reflection*. London: SCM Press.

Lamm, Julia A. 2019. *God's Kinde Love: Julian of Norwich's Vernacular Theology of Grace*. New York: Herder & Herder.

Llewelyn, Robert. ed. 1985. *Julian: Woman of our Day*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

———. 1994. *With Pity Not With Blame: The Spirituality of Julian of Norwich and the Cloud of Unknowing for today* (3rd edition). London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Luebering, Carol. 1995. *A Retreat with Job and Julian of Norwich: Trusting That All Will Be Well*. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press.

McAvoy, Liz Herbert. 2008. *A Companion to Julian of Norwich*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

McEntire, Sandra J. ed. 2012. *Julian of Norwich: A Book of Essays*. New York: Routledge.

McKisack May, 1959. *The Fourteenth Century* 1307–1399. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2010. *Anchoritic Traditions of Medieval Europe*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Magill, Kevin J. 2006. *Julian of Norwich: Mystic or Visionary?* Abingdon: Routledge.

Meninger, William, OCSO. 2010. *Julian of Norwich: A Mystic for Today*. Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books.

———. 2012. *All Manner of Things: Lectio Divina with Julian of Norwich*. Pecos, NM: Dove Publications.

Molinari, Paul. 1958. *Julian of Norwich: The Teaching of a 14th Century English Mystic.* London: Catholic Book Club.

Obbard, Elizabeth Ruth. 2011. *Introducing Julian Woman of Norwich* (3rd edition). London: New City.

Oliver, Andrea E. 2005. Battling Bishops: Late Fourteenth-Century Episcopal Masculinity Admired and Decried. in Christopher Harper-Bill 2005, 272–286.

Ormrod, W. M. 1990. The Peasants' Revolt and the Government of England. *Journal of British Studies* 29(1): 1–30.

Pelphrey, Brant. 1989. *Christ our Mother: Julian of Norwich*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

———. 2012. *Lo, How I Love Thee! Divine Love in Julian of Norwich*, edited by Julia Bolton Holloway. Shreveport, LA: Spring Deer Studio. [Updates and expands the first 1982 edition.]

Pennington, Emma. 2020. *At the Foot of the Cross with Julian of Norwich*. Abingdon: Bible Reading Fellowship.

———. 2025. *All Shall Be Well: Visions of Salvation with Julian of Norwich*. Abingdon: BRF Ministries.

Ramirez, Janina. 2016. *Julian of Norwich: A Very Brief Introduction*. London: SPCK.

Rawcliffe, Carole and Richard Wilson. eds. 2004. *Medieval Norwich*. London: Hambledon and London.

Reynolds, Anna Maria. n.d. Julian's Showing of Love in a Nutshell: Her Manuscripts and Their Contexts. Umilta.net at bit.ly/4lZmcHM. First published in *The Tablet*, 11 May 1996.

———. n.d. Some Literary Influences in *The Revelations* of Julian of Norwich. Umilta.net. 2025–04–11. First published in *Leeds Studies in English and Kindred Languages*, 78 (1952): 18–28. Available at http://bit.ly/4eXixYL

Rolf, Veronica Mary. 2013. *Julian's Gospel: Illuminating the Life & Revelations of Julian of Norwich*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

———. 2018. *An Explorer's Guide to Julian of Norwich*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Sheldrake, Philip. 2019. *Julian of Norwich: In God's Sight*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

———. 2022. God's meaning is love: The mystical theology of Julian of Norwich. *Acta Theologica*, 42 (Suppl. 33): 89–103. Available at bit.ly/4t8DF49

Turner, Denis. 2011. *Julian of Norwich, Theologian*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Upjohn, Sheila. 1989. *In Search of Julian of Norwich*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

———. 2014 [1997]. *Why Julian Now? A Voyage of Discovery*. Norwich: Friends of Julian of Norwich.

Walsh, Maureen L. 2012. Re-imagining Redemption: Universal Salvation in the Theology of Julian of Norwich. *Horizons* 39: 189–207.

Warren, Ann K. 1985 *Anchorites and Their Patrons in Medieval England*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Watson, Nicholas. 1993. The composition of Julian of Norwich's Revelation of Love. *Speculum* 68(3): 637–683.

———. 1995. Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409. *Speculum*. 70 (4): 822–864.

Whittock, Martyn. 2009. *A Brief History of Life in the Middle Ages: A Social History of Medieval England*. London: Robinson.

Ziegler, Philip. 2009. *The Black Death*. New York: Harper Perennial.

~ *Others*

Armstrong, Karen. 1994. *Visions of God: Four Medieval Mystics and their Writings*. New York: Bantam Books. [Richard Rolle, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Walter Hilton, and Julian of Norwich.]

Earle, Mary C. 2013. *Julian of Norwich: Selections from Revelations of Divine Love – Annotated and Explained*. with a foreword by Roberta, C. Bondi. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths.

Frykholm, Amy. 2010. *Julian of Norwich: A Contemplative Biography*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press.

Hart, David Bentley. 2019. *That All Shall Be Well: Heaven, Hell & Universal Salvation*. Durham, NC: Yale University Press.

Manton, Karen and Lynne Muir. 2005. *The Gift of Julian of Norwich*. Leominster: Gracewing. [Short expositions and selected passages, with calligraphy and illustrations.]

Ramelli, Ilaria L. E. 2019. *A Larger Hope? Universal Salvation from Christian Beginnings to Julian of Norwich*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

Tugwell, Simon. 1985. *Ways of Imperfection: An Exploration of Christian Spirituality*. Springfield, IL: Templegate.

✠

TYPEFACES

The text is set in Cloister 11.5/15 point, and 1999 Livius 13/15 point is used for Julian's writings. Cloister was designed by Morris Fuller Benton in 1913, and is based on the 1470 Venetian face of Nicolas Jenson. The accompanying italic is based on the 1501 italic face of Aldus Manutius. 1999 Livius is derived from hand-drawn sketches without any direct reference to historic models and was chosen for this edition to reflect the fact that Julian's work, of course, originated with and was disseminated (for over two centuries) in handwritten form. The typeface is available from KPS Fonts.

PICTURES & EMBELLISHMENTS

Sources for the pictures and images are indicated in their captions, and all are either in the public domain, used by permission or used under the terms of a Creative Commons licence. Details of the cover photograph are included on the back cover. The wavy line embellishment, also in the public domain, is taken from the front cover of Grace Warrack's 1901 edition of the *Revelations*, sourced from Wikimedia Commons. The little leaf at the start of each chapter is from the font P22 Morris Ornaments and reproduces a design by William Morris used in Doves Press editions in the early 20th century.

For readers wishing to search for terms, themes, or names within this volume – including the Introduction, Julian's texts, Appendices, Glossary and Bibliography – we recommend downloading the PDF from one of the sites listed below, where it may be searched in the usual way.

This book, including its typographical layout, is in the public domain and is published under a Creative Commons licence (CC-BY-NC-ND), which permits sharing and distribution provided the work is neither altered nor used for commercial purposes, and that proper attribution is given to the authors.

A copy of the PDF may also be requested directly by emailing the authors at showings1373@gmail.com

The file will be made available on a range of platforms, including:

The Christian Classics Ethereal Library
Directory of Open Access Books
Project Gutenberg
Internet Archive
Academia.edu
ResearchGate
Open Library
Z-Library

The file may be found by searching for *Showings of Love Paris Manuscript First Edition 2026*.